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## THE AGRICULTURAL GANG SYSTEM.

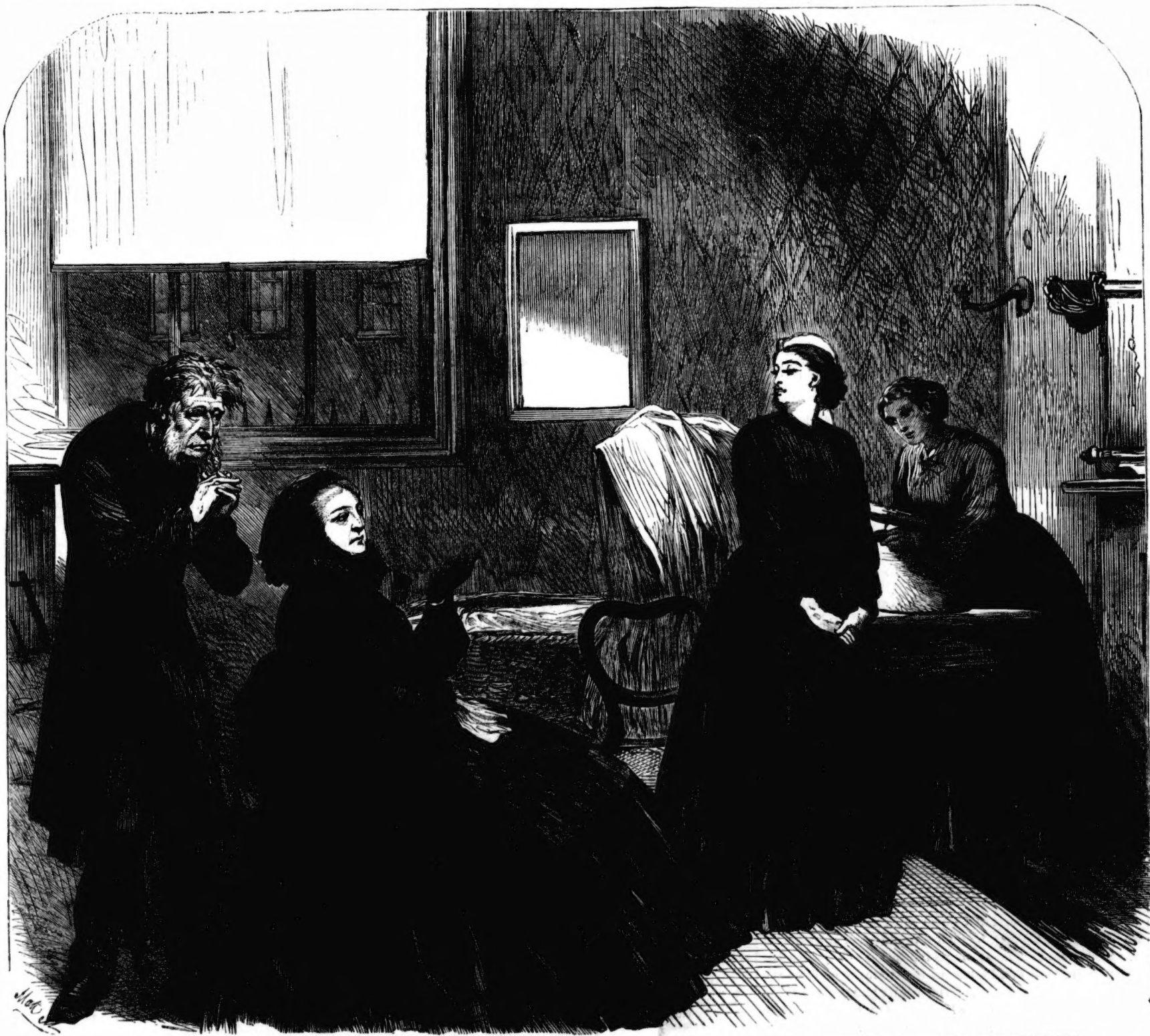
THE dictum that the "finest poetry is the most feigning," is, we fear, true of those pretty "lays in praise of a country life" which poets in all ages have delighted to compose. At all events, their pleasing pastoral pictures are wide of the truth in England in these prosaic days, whatever they may have been in the Arcadian ages. Rustic swains may have been able, once, to "fleet the time merrily, as they did in the golden world;" but assuredly they have fallen upon "hard lines" in these degenerate iron days. Your simple, piping Strephons; your "generous, rich Philemons;" your "neat-handed Phyllises," have few, if any, genuine representatives now. Rich Philemons, certainly, we have in plenty; but generous—much less just—ones, are few and far between. Indeed, were English Philemons uniformly just, we could dispense with their generosity. But that they are not universally just, let the condition of the peasants of Devonshire and almost everywhere else in the rural districts of England bear witness. Poor

Strephon, nowadays, instead of sitting on a flowery bank piping to his flocks from "morn till dewy eve" has no fate before him all his life long but "toiling and moiling" from daylight till dark for a paltry pittance of from seven shillings to ten shillings a week, with the workhouse as the goal of his miserable career, or—magnificent generosity of Philemon!—a sovereign and a coat in old age if he manages to keep off the rates and is meek enough never to complain. Phyllis may still, perhaps, be found neat-handedly dressing her "country messes;" but she is a wretched drudge for all that, with no hope of comfort in her declining years, and no prospect for her offspring save a deeper degradation, physically and morally, than that she has herself to endure. And all this, be it noted, in a land and in an age when the Philemons—the landed gentry and the yeoman farmers—are growing richer and more luxurious every day.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

In agricultural England at this time wealth is accumulating

fast—at least the profits of husbandry and the rent of land are rapidly increasing, and yet men are allowed to go as rapidly, or more so, to decay. Philemon becomes more rich, but not more generous or more just. Dropping metaphor and using plain language, we hesitate not to say that in the augmentation of wealth to the landowner and the farmer which the industry and enterprise of the manufacturing and mercantile community have mainly produced, the peasant has as yet been allowed no share. His wages are as low, his fare is as hard, his lodging is as poor, his children are as ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-taught as ever. Is this generous—nay, is it just? We will leave the lords of the soil, who specially arrogate to themselves the character of the working men's friends, when said working men are not their own labourers, to answer. There are Busfield Ferrands enough among the lords and squires of the land ever ready to be loud-mouthed and blatant in denouncing the oppression of the manufacturer to his operatives; and yet but few, seemingly, to advocate the cause of the miserable, ill-paid, half-starved peasant.



SCENE FROM MR. ROBERTSON'S NEW COMEDY, "CASTLE," AT THE PRINCE OF WALES'S THEATRE: THE MARQUISE OFFERING TO ADOPT ESTHER'S CHILD.



Bad, however, as is the case of the British peasant generally, there are districts in England where special and serious oppression is practised. Our readers have heard something of the "agricultural gang system" and of the horrors with which it is accompanied. This system is confined to particular localities; it is not general; and there is some consolation in that, for it may be the more easily checked. It has its seat mainly in what is known as the "Fen Country." The counties of Lincoln, Cambridge, Suffolk, Norfolk, Huntingdon, and Nottingham enjoy the bad pre-eminence of being the special homes of this detestable system; but it is also found occasionally in neighbouring shires, such as Rutland, Northampton, and Bedford. This Fen Country was, until a few years ago, generally a marshy, unproductive waste; and, but for continual care and labour, would speedily become a marsh again. To obtain the labour needful to keep the land in cultivation has been a difficult problem, for peasants' dwellings are few, and landlords and farmers, in order to keep paupers off their soil, have striven to make them fewer. The consequence is that labourers must be brought from a distance; and, to be effective, must be organised. Hence the origin of the "gang system," so ably exposed in the House of Lords the other evening by Lord Shaftesbury—one good, generous, and just Philemon, at least, is he. These gangs, organised by speculators called "gang masters," and hired out to the farmers, consist of young women, lads, and children of both sexes from six years of age upwards, and their wages range from fourpence to sixpence and eightpence a day. They have often to walk eight miles to and eight miles from the scene of their toil, which lasts from eight in the morning till five and half-past five in the evening. They have thus to perform a long journey—almost a soldier's day's march—and a hard day's work to boot. When their energies flag they are stimulated to renewed effort by the application of kicks, cuffs, and even blows with hoe-handles and similar implements. The wretched wages they receive will not, of course, buy them sufficient or proper food; their clothes are almost always saturated with wet, from working on the humid, marshy flats; their hands are lacerated by the efforts necessary to tear up the rank weeds that spring up, like Jonah's gourd, in the fat soil; and, there being no supervision exercised over them on their homeward way, the morals of the elder members of the gangs are terribly deteriorated. This, be it noted, takes place within the shadow of the walls, as it were, of one of our great national Universities, and where wealthy squires and "fat vicars" and, we presume, Vicars—abound. The poor people are all but totally uneducated, as must needs be the case where few appliances for education exist, and where neither time nor capacity for instruction is left to the toilers. 'Tis a terrible devil, this, that "looks o'er Lincoln," and ought to supply sufficient matter for thought to all concerned. Ah! Messieurs the Philemons of the Fens, should ye not have "earlier looked to this"?

The above is a brief epitome of the facts of the case. If details be wanted, they can be found in abundance in the reports of the Commissioners who have inquired into the subject. Into these details we cannot enter at length. They are too voluminous for our space, and many of them are unfit for our columns. We will therefore content ourselves with one extract, which is a fair sample of many others given in the reports:—

Mrs. Antony Adams, labourer's wife, Denton, Huntingdonshire—"In June, 1862, my daughters, Harriet and Sarah, aged respectively eleven and thirteen years, were engaged to work on Mr. Worman's land at Stilton. When they got there he took them to near Peterborough; there they worked for six weeks, going and returning each day. The distance each way is eight miles, so that they had to walk sixteen miles each day on all the six working days of the week, besides working in the field from eight to five or half-past five in the afternoon. They used to start from home at five in the morning, and seldom got back before nine. They had to find all their own meals, as well as their own tools (such as hoes). They (the girls) were good for nothing at the end of the six weeks. The ganger persuaded me to send my little girl Susan, who was then six years of age. She walked all the way (eight miles) to Peterborough to her work, and worked from eight to half-past five and received 4d. She was that tired that her sisters had to carry her the best part of the way home—eight miles—and she was ill from it for three weeks, and never went again."

The effects of the gang system are thus summarised by the Rev. H. Mackenzie, Rector of Tydd St. Mary:—

1, Loss of self-respect, and dirty and degraded habits; 2, slovenly and squalid households; 3, alienation of husbands by the discomforts of home; 4, neglect of the education of children; 5, drinking habits among the men, and opium consumption among the women. The effects of the employment of girls in gang fieldwork are:—1, boldness; 2, ignorance; 3, unchastity; 4, want of cleanliness in work and person; 5, incompetence in sewing, mending, cooking, and all that pertains to household economy; 6, indifference to parental control; 7, unwillingness to apply themselves to any regular mode of gaining a livelihood. Girls who have up to a certain time made good progress at school are materially injured in morals, discipline, knowledge, and regularity by going for two or three weeks to work in the fields.

There are two phases of this gang system, called respectively "public gangs" and "private gangs." The first comprise just now about 7000 persons, and the second about 20,000, according to estimate. The public gangs are in the pay of contractors, who sell their labour to the farmers; the private gangs are directly hired and controlled by the farmers themselves; and in both the evils we have described are rampant. The motive for the employment of these gangs is economy, the labour of women and children being, of course, cheaper than even the cheap labour of the adult male peasant. It is impossible for farmers and landowners to plead ignorance of the existing facts. The horrors of the gang system are perpetrated under their eyes, and, in the case of the private gangs, by their own orders, or at least with their connivance. Is it any indication of justice or generosity in these Fen Philemons thus to make profit of the degradation and destruction of the bodies and souls of those who toil that they may enjoy? Might not landlords abate something of their rent, and farmers curtail somewhat their own comforts, in order to obviate such evils as those exhibited

by the pernicious gang system? Wealth has duties as well as rights; and surely one duty of the employer is to take some heed of the well-being of the employed. This, however, is not done; no effort has been made to check a system that, as Lord Kimberley confessed, is well known by landlords to exist; and now, when Lord Shaftesbury proposes to apply the principles of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour, Mr. Walpole wishes for "further inquiry," and, through Lord Belmore, promises, perhaps, to take some step in the matter in "two or three years' time"—that is, an effort may possibly be made to check the mischief when it has become rooted and difficult of eradication. Our legislators of the Philemon class are ready enough—and rightly so—to regulate female and juvenile labour in factories, mines, and so forth, but will not stir their little fingers to stop oppression and cruelty in agricultural operations. Further inquiry is another phrase for delay, or non-intervention altogether, mayhap. We trust, however, that the matter will not be allowed to rest, and that Lord Shaftesbury will persevere in his intention to bring a bill into Parliament on the subject, and so crown the philanthropic labours of his life by protecting helpless toilers in our fields, as he has already done those in factories and mines.

#### MR. ROBERTSON'S NEW COMEDY, "CASTE."

A NOTICE of the new comedy at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, from the pen of our Theatrical Lounger, appeared in our last week's Number; but as that notice was confined mainly to a criticism of the piece, and did not give any detail of its incidents, it may be well to accompany our Engraving this week with a fuller description, and for that purpose we avail ourselves of an excellent article upon the play which appeared a few days ago in the *Times*, and which is understood to have been written by one of the ablest and most impartial dramatic critics of the day. The *Times* says:—

As might be inferred from its title, the comedy "Caste" treats of that distinction between various grades of society which, among the Brahmans, is marked by express law, and which among the more western representatives of the great Aryan race, is drawn by a prejudice which has scarcely less than legal force. Since all modern plays must have some reference to love, the question of *mésalliance* naturally presents itself as offering the ground on which the social battle is to be fought.

The plot is excellently constructed for the purpose of exhibiting and grouping the various characters. The Hon. George d'Alroy (Mr. Frederick Younge), son of the Marquise de Saint-Maur (Miss Larkin), an English lady of high birth married to a French nobleman, has fallen in love with Esther (Miss Lydia Foote), daughter of Eccles (Mr. George Honey), a dissipated specimen of the working man who does no work, and, during the absence of his mother on the Continent, d'Alroy visits the humble residence of the plebeian in the character of an honourable suitor. He is accompanied by his friend Captain Hawtree (Mr. Sydney Bancroft), who lectures him from a worldly point of view on the danger he is encountering by entering into a family so much below him in rank. Old Eccles is simply detestable; his two daughters support themselves and him by dancing at the "Theatre Royal, Lambeth" (wherever that may be); and, though Esther, the object of his choice, is a girl of superior manners, the same cannot be said of her sister, Polly (Miss Marie Wilton), who is a damsel of very blunt manners, engaged to Sam Gerridge (Mr. Hare), a worthy gasfitter, who neither tries nor even desires to elevate himself above his order. The reasoning of Captain Hawtree, specious as it is, has no effect on his fascinated friend, who, to prevent his beloved Esther from accepting an engagement at Manchester, proposes a speedy marriage, leaving to the Destinies the office of settling difficulties with his mother as best they may.

When the second act begins the union has taken place, and eight months have elapsed. The scene of action is now removed from the "little house in Stangate" to an elegant apartment in Mayfair, the residence of George d'Alroy and his young wife. A gloom is on the brow of the husband, which, however, arises not from regret at the matrimonial step he has taken, but from the fact that the regiment to which he and his friend Hawtree are attached is ordered to India on account of the sepoxy mutiny. This fact he has feared to communicate to Esther, thinking that the shock may be too great for her, and he would gladly transfer the unpleasant office to Hawtree, who in his turn is of opinion that the task of breaking the ice had best be confided to Polly, whose opportune call seems to promise a solution of the difficulty. But in a few moments another visit of a more portentous kind is paid. The formidable Marquise has returned unexpectedly from the Continent, totally ignorant of her son's marriage, and comes prepared to take leave of him prior to his departure for the war. The announcement of her arrival is a signal for the two sisters to conceal themselves in an ante-room; and the Marquise, finding herself alone with George, commences a maternal lecture. As becomes an unquestionable daughter of the Plantagenets, whom, with lofty pedantry, she prefers to call the "Plantagenists," the favourite author of the good old lady is Froissart, whose passages from whose chronicles she pours into her son's ear, who finds himself pelted by their aristocratic tendency, and "bored" by their length. At last there is a beam of sunshine. The old lady, after exhorting her boy to distinguish himself by the most chivalrous valour, changes the topic, and preaches in eloquent terms against the sin of seduction, extolling the love of a woman as something that soars high above all social distinctions. Poor George begins to fancy that this is just the right moment to confess his *mésalliance*; but, unfortunately, his mother's words have conveyed the first intimation of his approaching departure to the sisters hidden in the adjoining room, and a scream from Esther, who has fainted, causes the truth to be revealed without due preparation. The Marquise is not a little displeased so suddenly to find herself the mother-in-law of a young person of whose existence she was not aware a minute before; and the conduct of Polly, who has a rough spirit of independence, does not tend towards conciliation. Still, as Esther is a most presentable person, and Polly is tolerably free from offence when her temper is not ruffled, matters would not be altogether desperate did not the horrible old Eccles stagger into the room sodden with drink, accompanied by Sam Gerridge, who, though gifted with every virtue, has been niggardly in his worship of the Graces, and who in his best clothes looks even more plebeian than in his working attire. Horrified at the company by which she is surrounded, the Marquise seizes the arm of Captain Hawtree and sails from the room, while poor Esther takes leave of her husband and falls senseless to the ground. We may here pause to remark that this second act is a masterpiece of constructive skill. Every movement that takes place occurs naturally and answers a definite purpose; the whole act being, indeed, one situation gradually developed till it reaches its highest point of effectiveness.

Eighteen months have elapsed, and when the third act begins Esther is again at the "little house in Stangate," her father having lost all her money by low gambling. She wears a widow's dress, for news has arrived of the death of George in India, and at the back of the room is a crib, containing an infant to whom she has given birth since her husband's departure, and who, while the delight of his mother and aunt, is execrated by his hateful grandfather as an oppressive young aristocrat. The chief tyranny of the child consists in wearing a gold coral during a period of distress, when spirituous liquor is scarce in the establishment, and old Eccles thinks that he does but assert the rights of man when he detaches the "gaud" from the baby's neck with the intent to convert it into ready cash at the nearest pawnbroker's. The little operation is prevented by Esther, who immediately becomes a Goneril in the eyes of her father, and she has presently another battle to fight with the Marquise, who, hearing of her distressed condition, calls upon her, offering to take upon herself the care of the child, and who, indignantly repulsed, indignantly retires, much to the disgust of old Eccles, whose democratic proclivities have entirely vanished, and who now jumps at an alliance which promises to be lucrative as well as aristocratic. Captain Hawtree, who has returned from India, proves a kind friend to Esther, and at last happiness is restored by the reappearance of George d'Alroy, who, of course, was not really dead, but escaped from the sepoys, and who is amazed to find his wife a widow and himself a father. The joy felt by the Marquise at her son's return is too great to allow her to retain any feeling of resentment against Esther, and the curtain drops on a general condition of happiness, the long duration of which may be surmised from the fact that old Eccles, in consideration of an annuity, promises to live in Jersey, and there, liquor being cheap, to do his best to drink himself to death.

As a specimen of construction the third act is not to be compared with the second. We feel that George is killed and brought to life again just as his death or life happens to be useful, and that the change in the temper of the Marquise is due rather to the necessity of bringing the story to a happy close than to the operation of any moral law. A little compression, too, might be effected with advantage.

Nevertheless, the defects of the third act are more than compensated by the admirable character of old Eccles, which here reaches its fullest development. Eccles is a degraded mortal, who is always howling about the rights of labour, but who has scarcely been known to do a "stroke of work" within the memory of his oldest friends. He hates the aristocracy in theory, but is ready to lick the shoe of a person of quality if anything is to be made by the degradation. That democratic claptrap which is among the leading

nuisances of the day is satirised in this character with the most unsparring severity, and the direct effect of the part is heightened by the contrast of Eccles with Sam Gerridge, intended as a good specimen of the operative class. A less conservative writer would have found an opportunity for putting a little claptrap into the mouth of honest Sam, but such operations are not to the taste of Mr. Robertson. Sam is not at all idealised, nor are his uncouth appearance or the vulgar Terpsichorean feats which he performs under the influence of excessive joy accompanied by the possession of lofty sentiments. He is honest, industrious, and good-natured, has an eye ever directed to the main chance, and respects his own "caste" without less respecting that of others. He has a fitting partner in Polly Eccles, whose character is in the main similar to his own, though a tinge of feminine coquetry gives her somewhat the tone of a fine lady.

In the treatment of those of his personages who belong to the other "caste" Mr. Robertson still preserves his independence. The reader of the plot given above will probably imagine that George is a romantic youth intended to charm all the young ladies in the stalls—a noble creature with a soul too big for conventional bondage. He is nothing of the sort; but a slow, "spoony" youth, with a thickness of utterance which, totally distinct from a fashionable lisp, suggests a density of intellect. Luck, not wisdom, has guided him to the choice of such an excellent person as Esther. He has an excellent heart and a high spirit; but these can only show themselves under the influence of some pressure from without, his general manner being stolid and heavy. Let us add that he is intrusted to an essentially comic actor. The more decided "swell," Captain Hawtree, is marked by an ungainliness of another kind, and who is intended to show that a man is not necessarily hateful, even though he become almost boorish in his desire to be aristocratically exclusive. Neither is the loftiness of the Marquise to be rebuked with a scowl. She is not raised on a pedestal to be knocked down, but represents a social principle, and is to be respected accordingly.

The one ideal personage of the play is Esther, who is entirely distinct from her sister Polly, and in whom the boundary marks of "caste" vanish, though it is on her account that the battle of "caste" is fought. The author has even given her an aristocratic tinge; and when her spirit is roused she does not assert plebeian independence, like Polly, but speaks as Mrs. George d'Alroy, mother of a child of ancient lineage.

### Foreign Intelligence.

#### FRANCE.

There is no definite information in reference to Luxemburg. It is clear, however, that the assurances given by the French papers, that a satisfactory solution was probable, do not find much belief in France. The *Avenir National*, which told of extensive war preparations and the movements of great quantities of war materials to the eastern frontiers of France, is, it seems, to be prosecuted for publishing false news. But the same story is told by several other French papers, and it appears to be the merest affectation to pretend that in the way of war preparation nothing particular is going on. A story is current to the effect that France has sounded Austria as to the course she would take should war break out between France and Prussia. Baron von Benst is reported to have replied that Austria would remain neutral until she saw which Power offered her the best terms, and then she would take sides.

A circular has been issued by the Minister of War which fixes the sum to be paid for exemption from military service at 3000*fr.* during the year 1867. The price of exemption for each year of military service remaining to be performed is fixed at 600*fr.*

#### SPAIN.

The prize court at Cadiz has declared the capture of the Queen Victoria by the Spanish cruiser to be illegal.

The Spanish Government is determined on silencing all opposition to its unconstitutional and arbitrary acts. A Royal decree has just been issued dismissing from their posts five magistrates who had the boldness to vote in the Senate in favour of the motion expressing regret at the harsh measure of the Government against General Serrano; and the Minister of the Interior told the members of the Opposition in the Chamber that the Government will persevere with the repressive system so long as the parties opposed to it persist in their revolutionary attitude. The Government has also succeeded in obtaining an act of indemnity for its unconstitutional acts by an almost unanimous vote: there were only four dissentients in the Cortes.

#### ITALY.

Signor Rattazzi, having been called upon last Monday, in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, to afford the members information on the late Ministerial crisis and as to the policy of the new Administration, declined to give any information on the first point, but as to the policy of the Cabinet he said it would be based on the same principles as those of its predecessor; and that, as to Rome, his Government will faithfully execute the September Convention, and prevent any attempt calculated to compromise the country on the Roman question.

Senator Count Campello has been appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs; and the Prefect Colucci, Director-General of the Department of Public Safety.

The Italian Government has given very stringent orders to prevent or repress any attempt to violate Pontifical territory.

The Senate, sitting as a High Court of Justice, has found Admiral Persano guilty of disobedience, incapacity, and negligence. He is condemned to retire from the service, to be degraded from the rank of Admiral, and to pay the costs of the trial. This is a heavy punishment.

#### GERMANY.

After a course of wonderful success in the North German Parliament, Count Bismark, on Tuesday, met with an important check upon the article of the Constitution referring to the federal military system. Two amendments were proposed—one by Count Stolberg, according to which the strength of the federal army on a peace footing would remain unaltered until a common federal code of laws should be promulgated; and the other by Duke Ujest, proposing that the next five years should be a period of transition, and that after that period the army on a peace footing should be maintained at the same strength as hitherto, till the promulgation of a general code. Count Bismark strongly opposed the latter amendment and favoured the former; but, nevertheless, the amendment of Count Stolberg was negatived, by 116 votes, against 110 votes; and that of Duke Ujest adopted, by 202 against 80 votes.

In Wednesday's sitting of the Parliament Count Bismark announced that the Federal Government have resolved to adhere to the Constitution as voted by Parliament. He therefore formally declared the Constitution of the North German Confederation adopted both by the Parliament and by the Governments. The Parliament was closed in the afternoon by the King in person. In his speech, his Majesty praised the manner in which the Parliament had gone about its work. The result was, he said, in effect, that a Constitution had been agreed to upon a sure basis, and its development might be confidently left to the future. The individual States had their future guaranteed by the Bund; while their freedom of action in all departments where it was desirable was retained. Popular representation was secured, while the necessary co-operation of the States was made sure. Further, he pointed to the Constitution as affording a guarantee for the future fruitful development of the Confederation with the conclusion of which also the hopes common to them with their brethren in South Germany had advanced nearer to their fulfilment. "The time," said the King, "has arrived when our German Fatherland is able to uphold its peace, its rights, and its dignity by its own collective strength. The national self-consciousness, which has found elevated expression in the Parliament, has met with a powerful echo from all quarters of Germany. None the less, however, are all the Governments and people of Germany unanimous that the regained power of the nation has, above all, to uphold its significance by rendering secure the blessings of peace."

No time is being lost in the consolidation of Germany. The Bavarians have given further proofs of their satisfaction with the treaty which makes them one with the North German States. On her side, Prussia is anxious to have the changes made in her constitution by the North German Parliament ratified. For this purpose the convocation of the Prussian Chambers is to be hastened as much as possible. Hesse-Darmstadt has placed itself in respect to Prussia in the same position as Saxony.



## AUSTRIA.

Austria, having apparently got Hungary satisfactorily settled, finds a new difficulty with Bohemia. There has been something very like a row in the Bohemian Diet. Not less than ninety of the members, after protesting against certain irregularities in the late elections, threw up their posts and left the chamber. Then followed such a scene of commotion that the President had to order the galleries to be cleared. A letter from Prague gives the following account of the affair:—

The sitting was marked by a strong Czech demonstration. Immediately after the new President of the Diet (Count Hartig) had delivered his address in the German language and had proposed three cheers for the Emperor of Austria, a voice from the centre exclaimed, "No; let us cry *slava* (glory) to the King of Bohemia!" which was accordingly done by all the Czech deputies. The President then laid before the Diet, still in the German language, several Government bills, upon which Dr. Gregor, a Czech, asked that these bills should be read to the Czech deputies in their own tongue. This demand was, to a certain extent, complied with by the Vice-President reading an abstract of the bills in the Czech language. But here another deputy protested, insisting that the Czech deputies had as good a right as the Germans to hear the full text of the bills in their own language. The secretary then read a literal translation of the bills. The Czechs, however, were still not satisfied, deplaining that a slight was being put upon their nation by the secretary reading bills to them which were read to the German deputies by the President. An indescribable tumult ensued, several Czechs and Germans speaking at once, and the President vainly attempting to restore order with his bell. At length the Czechs were pacified with the President promising that in future all speeches delivered by him in German would at once be translated for their benefit into Czech by the Vice-President.

## RUSSIA.

The Government has determined to immediately introduce certain reforms in the military administration, thereby anticipating the execution of the scheme which is at present being considered for the general reorganisation of the army system.

The budget for the year 1867 was officially promulgated here on Tuesday. The total revenue is stated at 443,800,000 roubles, including 15,000,000 taken from the Anglo-Dutch Loan of 1866 to cover the deficit of that amount. 25,500,000 roubles are appropriated for the construction of railways, and are covered by receipts from special sources. The expenditure on account of the National Debt is 73,750,000 roubles. The budget for Poland shows a revenue of 16,500,000 roubles and an expenditure of 20,100,000 roubles. An Imperial ukase has been published placing the financial administration of Poland wholly under the control of the Russian Minister of Finance.

## TURKEY.

Omar Pacha, the Turkish Commander-in-Chief, has left Constantinople with a large force for Crete, with orders to strike a decisive blow against the insurrection in that island. He will afterwards take the command of the army on the Greek frontier.

## THE UNITED STATES.

The Supreme Court of the United States has refused the application for an injunction to restrain the enforcement of the Reconstruction Act in the State of Mississippi, but has allowed the application on the part of Georgia to be filed. In the former the injunction was applied for as against the President, and in the latter against the military Governors; and hence, probably, the difference in the decisions of the Court.

The Democrats have carried the Connecticut elections by a majority of 700 votes; one Republican and three Democrats have been returned to Congress. The elections for the Legislature of that State have also resulted in a large gain for the Democrats.

Mr. Sumner has announced that on the reassembling of Congress he will call up a bill for the establishment of universal suffrage throughout the United States.

A Conservative Convention of Whites and Blacks was held at Nashville on the 1st inst. The coloured speakers declared that the Southern men and the negroes were the best of friends, and that their interests were identical.

Dacotah Territory has been captured by the Indians, and a United States garrison, under Colonel Rankin, massacred.

H. J. Raymond has been nominated Minister to Austria.

An explosion has occurred in a coal-pit in Pennsylvania, near Pittsville, whereby twelve persons lost their lives.

The Supreme Court has restored the ship Peterhoff to the owners.

## BRAZIL.

The Brazilian Government, with the view of strengthening their army in Paraguay, where the war was languishing, had called out 8000 of the National Guard of Rio de Janeiro as a reinforcement. Many of the men refused to obey this apparently unconstitutional summons, and several of the officers were suspended.

## HAYTI.

On the 27th ult., a public proclamation was made banishing the late President Geffard and his family from the island for ever. Six of his followers were exiled for ten years. General Salnave, the leader in the late Cape Hayti disturbance, was expected to take Geffard's place. The new representatives were to be elected on the 8th inst., and the President on the 19th. Her Majesty's ship Cadmus was in the port, watching British interests. The British Consul refused to grant protection to Geffard's son unless he went on board the Cadmus.

## MEXICO.

Advices from Mexico state that 3000 Republicans, under Trabuco, had pronounced for Ortega. The Liberals had abandoned Tampico. The Republicans in the State of Tamaulipas had refused to join the forces of Juarez.

## THE STRIKE ON THE NORTH-EASTERN RAILWAY.

THE strike of engine-drivers on the North-Eastern Railway is occasioning an immense amount of inconvenience in the district. The directors are endeavouring to get men wherever they can, and they have succeeded so far that several trains have been able to run. Proceedings which have been taken against some of the men do not appear to have been successful; except in one instance, where the proof of contract was held to be complete.

The following statement has been published by the committee of the men on strike:—

The engine-drivers and firemen who have left the employment of the North-Eastern Railway are anxious that the public should know the cause of dispute between them and their employers, and what has led to the withdrawing of 1600 from the service of the company. It is generally known that, in common with our fellow-workmen throughout England, we have been endeavouring to obtain a reduction in our hours of labour to ten hours a day, and an increase in our wages to 7s. a day, with several other arrangements as to overtime and Sunday work. It has been universally admitted that, considering the nature of our duties, these claims are reasonable; and almost every railway company in England has granted them. It has been reserved for the North-Eastern Company alone to treat our claims with contempt; to make us promises on one day to be falsified the next; and by an utter indifference and want of feeling to goad us into a step inconvenient to the public, disastrous to the company, and painful to ourselves. We have had many fruitless interviews with both directors and superintendents on the subject of our memorial, and at one time thought that we had secured what would satisfy us, although falling short of what we desired. We were content to accept the promise of ten hours' labour a day, and 7s. pay, with a shed day once a week, leaving the Sunday work and overtime as before. But, although these were promised us, we soon found we could place no reliance on it, and were ultimately told they would pay us what they liked, and no more. Then, as to the shed day, which we may explain as being a kind of resting-day, when the engines and boilers are looked to and cleaned, we were booked "off" on that day, thereby stopping our pay and reducing our weekly wages. It was on this that a kind of panic arose among the men at Darlington, by the faithlessness and deception of their superiors, with whom they had been treating, and they immediately struck work, and have been followed by the men on the other sections, and on the main line, to the number, as we have already stated, of 1600. Now, we ask the public, with all respect and concern, who is responsible for this state of things? Why should the men on the North-Eastern be singled out of all other lines in the kingdom to wrestle with such oppression? And why should the North-Eastern Company so persistently refuse to concede even less than other companies have granted? We cannot tell. It is, indeed, rumoured that there is a kind of confederacy to make this line the battle-

field on which to combat the engine-drivers and firemen of the United Kingdom, and destroy their union. We don't believe this. We know that other companies have met their men in such a conciliatory spirit, and granted their requests in a way which have attracted them more than ever to their interests and secured their warmest gratitude. But if such a confederacy were to be attempted, it would only strengthen the union of the men, and lead to results which might call for a national interposition. It is said that the directors of the North-Eastern are indifferent about this affair, and profess to believe that they can soon replace the men who have left. Perhaps they can. But we tell them that if the men who may take our places are to be treated in the oppressive way we have been there will be neither comfort nor satisfaction for employer or employed on the North-Eastern Railway. In addition to our loss of a fortnight's wages, which the company refuses to pay, we are threatened with prosecutions, and a large number of our fellow-workmen are already cited to appear before the magistrates. It is a proof how oppression has made us defiant that we are more and more determined to unite together to carry this struggle through to its "bitter end."

ADMISSION TO THE PARIS EXHIBITION.—Englishmen who go to Paris to see the Exhibition must remember to bring their photographs with them. This is the last new invention of the French to secure that season-tickets shall not be transferred. There are three classes of season-tickets. First of all, there are the tickets of exhibitors and their agents. Hitherto there has been no photograph attached to these, but the photographers of the Exhibition are now ready to give the finishing touch to them by affixing to them the likenesses of their possessors. Next, there are tickets for visitors which admit to the Exhibition at all times, from the beginning to the end. These have a portrait of the owner, a little bigger than a postage-stamp, gummed upon them. Lastly, there are the weekly tickets, and it is in these that our English friends are chiefly interested. The price of admission to the Champ de Mars is a franc, and when it is announced that the price of a weekly ticket is 6s., most persons will be disposed to say that it is not worth while to compound for the difference. But they are wrong. There are certain reserved hours of the morning when the price of admission is a couple of francs; there are certain gates of entrance, also, where the price is more than a franc; and there are certain supplementary exhibitions in the park and elsewhere, the proprietors of which have authority to levy extra tolls. The weekly tickets at six francs cover all expenses of admission to the Exhibition, at all its gates, at all times when it is open, for a week from the day of issue, and they admit to all the supplementary parts of the Exhibition. The visitor who wishes for such a ticket will present his carte de visite at the proper office. The ticket (a thin strip of printed paper) will be gummed across his portrait, leaving the head visible; and the official stamp of the Imperial Commission will then be (not printed, but) embossed upon it, so as to prevent the possibility of fraud. The whole process is the work of a minute, and does some credit to the ingenuity of the French commission.

## THE FENIAN TRIALS.

FRESH arrests of persons suspected of Fenianism and of complicity in the late outbreak are constantly being made throughout Ireland, and scarcely a day passes that the Dublin police magistrates are not engaged in making preliminary investigations into the charges preferred. Such scenes as that depicted in our Engraving are therefore of daily occurrence. The Special Commission for Dublin was opened in that city on the 8th instant, but the trial of political prisoners will not be entered upon till after the re-assembling of the Court on the 24th. The indictment against the prisoners to be arraigned for high treason in Dublin when the Court sits again charges that "General" Burke, "Captain" McCafferty, Edward Duffy, Flood, and fourteen others, conspired together traitorously, in the United States, and, in July, 1866, within the parish of St. Peter, Dublin, along with James Stephens, John O'Mahony (the original American head centre), Colonel Kelly, General Cluseret, Doran Killian, James J. Rogers, General Mullen, General Vifquain, General Fariola, General Condon, Captain Doherty, Captain Gleeson, Captain McClure, and other (Americans, or American Irish) false traitors, to incite certain foreigners (of the same nationality or residence) with force and arms to invade the part of the United Kingdom called Ireland. Many of the names are familiar to readers of Fenian proceedings in New York journals. It is charged that, to carry out their wicked designs, these persons made divers journeys, among the rest to Chester, and subsequently collected at Tallaght, near Dublin, 3000 strong, to raise an insurrection and carry off military weapons, the property of her Majesty, "whereby they might the better arm themselves to fight against the Queen's troops and soldiers." They did so arm themselves with guns, pistols, and pikes, for the purpose of "committing slaughter of her Majesty's subjects and levying war." They made public war by firing upon various bodies of constabulary. In their "warlike attack" on the police barrack of Stepaside they demanded a surrender "in the name of the Irish Republic," compelled the constables to give up possession, and took them into their custody. The affrays at Kilmallock, Ballyknockane, Ballyhurst, and in the town of Drogheda, are declared to be incidents of the same conspiracy, and attempts to depose her Majesty from the style, honour, and kingly name of the Imperial crown of this realm. The prisoners are further charged with having consulted and endeavoured to seduce the troops of the Queen from their allegiance; also with having "prepared guns, pistols, pikes, powder, and bullets to fight against the soldiers and constables, and with having actually fought against them arrayed in a warlike manner," whereby lives were lost. Nearly 200 witnesses are on the list in one of the cases likely to be first brought on, chiefly resident magistrates, constables, and detective officers of the Dublin city police. There are, among them, the names of Captain R. F. Wellesley, aide-de-camp of Lord Strathnairn, and a number of military officers and soldiers.

According to "General" Massey, who has turned informer, the Fenian conspiracy in Ireland forms but part of a more general and revolutionary organisation, extending not only to America but over the whole of Europe. Massey, who fainted on his arrest at Limerick junction just two days before the rising, appears to have thought it better to become approver for his own sake, and, from the high position he held in Fenian circles, has been able to impart to the Government most valuable information concerning the great secrets of the conspiracy, its plans and objects, the names of the principal persons connected with it in this country, the station taken by each in the "Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood," as he designates it; and has, it is stated, even implicated several men holding high social positions. He was the principal witness for the Crown before the grand jury, at the special commission, on Monday last. Though declining to name the leaders of the movement, he gave what, if it be true, is considered most important information, which would tend to the belief that Fenianism has received encouragement, if not aid, from several parts of the European Continent. The Crown have also been put in possession of what are alleged by him to be facts relative to the part taken by some persons of high authority in the United States in encouraging and assisting the promoters of this society. He has been removed to comfortable quarters while the detectives are engaged inquiring into matters sworn to by him. His evidence at the commission is expected to be surprising; and it is likely that the list of prisoners consequent on his information will be somewhat enlarged. Already there is an announcement that one of Massey's statements has led to the decision to have separate special commissions for the city and county of Cork.

No trace of Kirwan has yet been discovered. The day he escaped from the hospital was for visitors; and, notwithstanding the protest of the officers of the institution, five women were admitted to see him at one time, no policeman being in the room. The medical men attending the prisoner informed the police that Kirwan was not nearly so bad as he pretended, and that a strict watch should be kept on him. The policeman who had charge of the prisoner had been promised a draught by the resident pupil on the previous day, and when he went into the ward he saw a woman rekindling the fire. He then went out again, shutting the door behind him for the purpose of going up to the apothecary's room. Kirwan immediately requested the woman to leave the room, which she did. A few minutes after his escape was discovered. An old basin-stand with a box on it were found next morning standing against a wall, at the other side of which he would be free; so it is supposed that, being previously informed of the internal arrangement of the hospital, he went out the back way in order to lead the police astray, as he would be expected to go out by the door, which

was only a few yards off. Before the police were placed on duty, the ward in which the two wounded Fenians lay was kept constantly locked, and one of the officials held the key, but when the authorities took the prisoners in charge this precaution was relaxed, as it was believed all responsibility ceased. Keely, the constable who was in charge of Kirwan when he escaped, has been arrested, and it is said that he has been identified as having been in the habit of attending Fenian meetings.

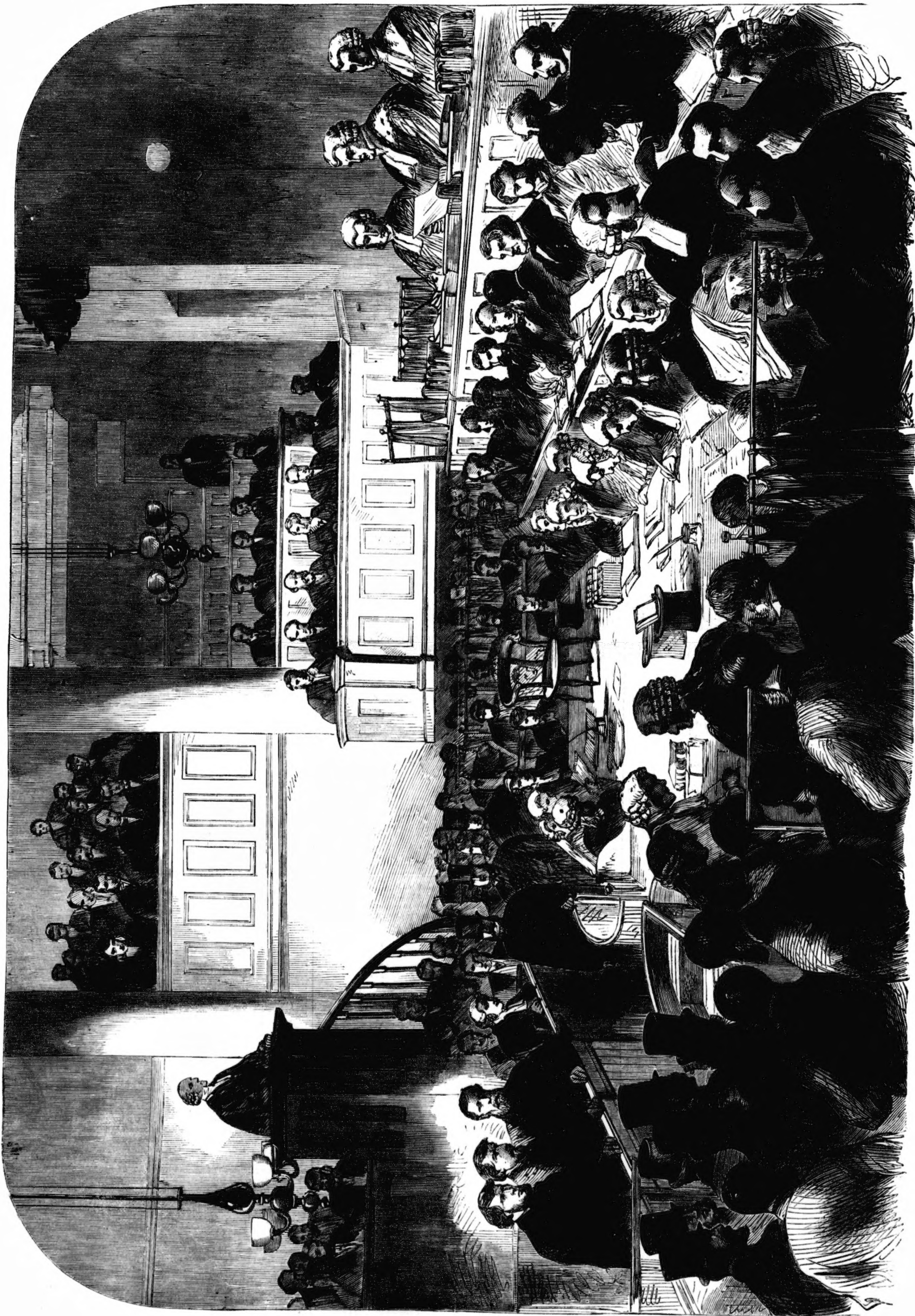
The Irish Americans who lately came over to this country with the intention of fomenting treason or of taking part in the rising, will very likely feel a little surprised when supplied with a copy of the evidence to be used against them. They could hardly have believed that some of those who had come over with them, and who took part in the principal Fenian meetings held but a few days prior to the rebellious movement of Shrove Tuesday night, would have been the first to betray them. One of these men, Charles Edward King Joyce, was brought up at the head police office yesterday, charged, on the information of a person who came over from America with him, with being a member of the Fenian brotherhood, and having combined with others to levy war against the Queen. Joyce, who appeared to be a person of respectability and intelligence, was in custody of one of the detectives. The informer gives his name as Lieutenant John Joseph Cullen, of the Federal army, and states that up to a recent period he was himself a member of the brotherhood. For some time previous to the magistrate coming into court Cullen occupied a seat under the bench, and appeared perfectly indifferent to the gaze of those whose curiosity was excited by his presence. Several times he complained, and in loud terms, of the treatment he was at present receiving, and of the character of the food supplied to him in the quarters he had been put into. When placed in the witness-box he verified his information previously made respecting the prisoner. In it he stated that he had been in America since 1862, and had but recently returned to Ireland. He saw the prisoner attend and take part at Fenian meetings in America, and subsequently in Carey's public-house in this city; that afterwards Joyce went back to America, but returned again, and that after his return witness saw him in Liverpool, at a meeting, with Captain Dunne, McCafferty, and others. He believed the intention of the prisoner and those who accompanied him from America was to levy war against the Queen. In consequence of this evidence Joyce was sent for trial at the Commission. All the Fenian informers from the various parts of the country have been brought to Dublin within the last few days, in order to have their evidence prepared for the commission, as the prisoners will get copies of the informations. But the Government now feels a kind of difficulty in dealing with the number of informers that are so rapidly coming forward, and they will be obliged to decline the services of a great many of these too willing approvers, for it has turned out that in their eagerness to save themselves they have actually sworn to too much, and the police have recommended that they be sent back from the comparatively comfortable quarters in which they have been placed to their prison cells. It is now stated that the chief informer, General Massey, is none other than Patrick Corcoran, or Corcoran, who held the rank of Colonel in the Federal army. His parents left Tipperary while he was an infant.

## THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

Do the visitors to the great art-exhibition of the Royal Academy ever think of those rejected pictures supposed to be stowed away in some dark subterranean cavern beneath the gloomy cell devoted to the concealment of sculpture? What neglected treasures, over which men have spent sleepless nights and laborious days, may be lying in that remote limbo of the unhung, only to be stealthily removed after the bustle and excitement, the triumph and admiration, the patronage and criticism are over, and the hanging committee join the St. John's-wood dictators in a congratulatory dinner to celebrate their successful discrimination! Ah! what muttered execrations! what sighs of unfulfilled hope! what unutterable, longing moans may be supposed to echo within those empty rooms when the last "great work" has been taken down and goes to the patron's or the dealer's; when light feet have departed, and rustling trains no longer sweep the floors. Do the ghosts of the condemned pictures haunt the walls and come in solemn procession to take their places on or above the line? Perhaps so. And it may be that, could we gain admission to the show, it would not be altogether wanting in works worthy of a long journey to see.

There is a day before the opening of the great picture-show more suggestive to the thoughtful loungee even than the occasion of the private view. The Last Day for receiving works of art for exhibition—the Eleventh Hour, before the closing of those portals within which some young, ardent, and aspiring spirits have ventured, without first leaving all hope behind. Standing here outside the marvellous building which is at once the envy and the admiration of the civilised world as a unique example of the utterly hopeless order of architecture; standing, on Friday week, on the spot once occupied by the Happy Family, and now periodically devoted to the accommodation of a blind man on a wooden stool, the loungee aforementioned might have witnessed a painful and, at the same time, a marvellous spectacle, one illustrative of the irrepressible ambition which can alone sustain the pursuit of art as a profession in this country. We all know how few are the chances of an unknown man to obtain even a remote and dingy corner of those sacred walls, a corner so far below the overhanging frame of some vast acreage of canvas that his friends have to do penance on their knees to see his modest work. In which of our contemporaries was it that a wall arose from one of the outsiders, and the process of selection (less natural than Darwin's) adopted by the committee was made known? Who did not thrill with pitying horror when they thought of that grim hanging committee (suggestive title!) sitting in solemn conclave, after having given the most available space to the great masters, and passing in review before them the entire series of unknown works by the simple expedient of glancing at each picture as it was carried past by a porter, who, when he carries it upside down, knows as well as his masters that the size in superficial inches may have more to do with its probable acceptance than the drawing, which there is no time to look at, or the colour, which is already killed by its being regarded as part of a kaleidoscopic panorama, a procession of fragments, some of which may be used as so much wall covering to fill the unsightly gaps and spaces left by the frames of the favoured few. On this principle, the aspiring young man who so carefully conveys his two or three "bits" at the eleventh hour has the greatest chance; for one of them may fill a square foot where there is a nail hole in the paper, at the corner of some sprawling piece whose overbearing shadow will rest upon his work and take the light out of its best effect. He doesn't know it, poor fellow! though that very canvas, big enough for a tent, is at this moment being lowered from a van. Up he goes, he and others like him, fearful that it is already too late, and ignorant of the stacks of unnoticed performances which perspiring porters have already stowed away in the cellars. Come down—come back—and form a league, you and your brothers and sisters in art. See what your fellow-workmen—the stonemasons, the carpenters, and the engine-drivers—have done by co-operation, and take them for your example. Refuse to send in pictures to be treated as so many square feet of wall ornament or to be rejected—no, not even rejected, for that implies something like examination—to be utterly ignored and neglected. Leave the few to themselves. Let the committee go hang! and open an exhibition of your own for a limited number of pictures chosen by a committee annually elected. It is to the studios that patrons and connoisseurs now go to see the pictures. The quiet studios with their arranged lights and quaint old furniture, and all the belongings so dear to artists, which form the best accessory frame to the easel and the canvas. Still, there must be exhibitions. It would be derogatory to the national high-art show to hang some of the biggest flaring attractions outside, where there is most room for them, and so we want another gallery—an academy, let us say, for the exhibition of low art productions; fresh provisions which require hanging, young draughts from the fount of Castaly bottled for a moderate feast of reason and a temperate flow of soul.





FENIAN PRISONERS AT GREEN-STREET COURT, DUBLIN, ON CHARGES OF HIGH TREASON.



## MR. DISRAELI.

We have already had occasion in these columns to publish particulars of the life of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose Portrait this week illustrates our pages; but it may not be out of place once more to furnish our readers with some details of the career of this remarkable man. Mr. Disraeli, then, is the eldest son of the late Mr. Isaac Disraeli, of Bradenham, Bucks, the well-known author of the "Curiosities of Literature;" is of Hebrew extraction, and was born in London, Dec. 31, 1805. He was early articled in a solicitor's office, and became an author while yet a minor. In 1825 he took the novel-reading public by surprise with "Vivian Grey," followed, at intervals, by "The Young Duke," "Henrietta Temple," "Contarini Fleming," "Venetia," "The Wondrous Tale of Alroy," and other brilliant works of imagination. Leaving England in the year 1829, he spent the winter at Constantinople, and, travelling afterwards through Syria, Egypt, and Nubia, returned to his native shores in 1831, when he found the English people violently excited on the question of Parliamentary Reform. He contested the borough of Wycombe on Tory principles against the Hon. C. Grey, son of the then Premier, and was defeated by a narrow majority. In 1837 he entered Parliament as M.P. for Maidstone, which constituency he exchanged in 1841 for Shrewsbury. In 1847 he was returned for the county of Buckingham, which he has continued to represent to the present time. He adhered to Sir R. Peel's party until that Minister became a convert to the doctrines of free trade; but from that date allied himself closely with the Conservative party, of which he became the acknowledged leader in the House of Commons after the death of Lord G. Bentinck. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Derby's Administrations of 1852 and 1858-9, and in the latter year brought in a Reform Bill. Mr. Disraeli, in the Parliamentary Session of 1864, vehemently opposed Lord Palmerston's Government, especially on the question of its foreign policy. Mr. Disraeli is an honorary D.C.L. of Oxford, a Privy Councillor, a trustee of the British Museum, a governor of Wellington College, a trustee of the National Portrait Gallery, and a Deputy-Lieutenant for Bucks, in which his estate of Hughenden Manor is situate. He was also a Royal Commissioner of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Among Mr. Disraeli's publications since his entrance on political life have been "Coningsby," "Sybil," "Tancred"—works curiously compounded of politics and fiction; "A Vindication of the English Constitution," a biography of Lord G. Bentinck, &c. In 1864 he republished an early poetical work, entitled "A Revolutionary Epic."

In 1866 Mr. Disraeli, on the defeat of the Russell-Gladstone Cabinet on the Reform question, once more became Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons; and has also, once again, introduced a Reform Bill. Of the efforts he has made to carry that



THE RIGHT HON. BENJAMIN DISRAELI, CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

measure everybody is able to judge; but the following remarks of the *Morning Post* on the right hon. gentleman's latest triumph—the defeat of Mr. Gladstone's amendment on Friday night week—are just and discriminating:—"Political parties are, however, not always guided by abstract principles, and the desire of retaining, or the hope of gaining, office more frequently influences their decisions than any conviction of the excellence of the measures they support. No one who reflects for one moment can doubt that, had Mr. Gladstone, instead of Mr. Disraeli, introduced the present bill, not one of the 267 Conservatives who voted with the majority would have followed the member for South Lancashire into the lobby, and this brings us to the consideration of what many persons will think the most important branch of the question, namely, the causes of the disruption of a great and powerful party. Some attribute the victory of the Conservative party to the great ability and skill of their leader, whilst others ascribe it to the petulance, the egotism, and the wilfulness of the Opposition chief. Mr. Disraeli, say the one side, has vindicated his claim to be considered the most able and skilful of Parliamentary chieftains. Mr. Gladstone, say the other side, has ruined the Liberal party. It would not be easy to say which is most undeserved, the praise or the blame. In the annals of Parliamentary history it would perhaps be impossible to find a record of so many serious and totally inexcusable blunders committed by a leading statesman within so short a time as those of which Mr. Disraeli has been guilty during the present Session. They were simply marvellous, and they are too fresh in the minds of every one to need any special mention. To ascribe the result of the late division to any skill on the part of Mr. Disraeli, except so far as it was manifested by the democratic nature of his measure, is flattery the fulsome of which we are sure no one would be more ready to condemn than the right hon. gentleman himself. Nor can the blame attached to Mr. Gladstone be more easily justified."

"It is impossible to deny that during the eighteen months in which Mr. Gladstone has held the position of leader of the Liberal party he has but too often given evidence of an inability to appreciate and make due allowance for that diversity of opinion which, in some form or another, must manifest itself in a numerous body of men, however linked together they may be by political association. The blind fidelity with which the Liberal party followed Lord Palmerston seems to have engendered in the mind of his successor the idea that it is only necessary to command in order to be obeyed, and the great fiasco of last Session was unquestionably attributable to the dictatorial tone adopted towards his followers by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer. He asked his supporters to accept, without demur, the proposition which he laid down, and if they hesitated he forthwith ap-



"THE ELEVENTH HOUR" AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY SEND-IN DAY.



pealed, not to their reason or consideration, but to their fears and their party ties, by challenging a division. The experiment succeeded several times, till at length it failed, and all previous victories were lost in a single defeat. It must also be admitted that the lesson of last year has not inspired wisdom. For a time Mr. Gladstone evinced a readiness, if not absolutely a willingness, to be guided by the wishes of his followers. But it was only for a time; and if there is any subject-matter for regret, it is that, if he intended appealing to their party allegiance, he did not make the appeal sooner. The golden opportunity, if it ever existed, was thrown away when the second reading was permitted of a bill the principle of which was condemned by the majority. Then came the meeting at Carlton House-terrace, when Mr. Gladstone ostensibly invited his supporters to consult with him, but virtually called on them to obey his commands. The celebrated tea-room meeting was the consequence, and the withdrawal of the carefully-devised "instruction" the ultimate result. These were blunders, it is true; but they do not account for Saturday morning's division. Whether another leader might have been enabled, by different tactics, to ensure a different result, it is, of course, impossible to say. But we do not think that the defeat of the Liberal party can be justly laid at Mr. Gladstone's door. Those who deserted his standard were influenced by what they conceived to be the more liberal offer of his adversary; and, unless Mr. Gladstone had consented to propose household suffrage pure and simple, they would have recorded their votes in favour of the Government. It is, however, not on that account the less disheartening to Mr. Gladstone to find himself twice foiled, although the reputed chief of an overpowering majority. With that majority he failed to carry a bill last year, and with the same majority he has now failed to arrest the progress of a bill of which he and most others heartily disapprove. The fact is, a large section of the Liberal party has been—if we may use the term—more conscientious than their adversaries; that is to say, they have allowed their personal convictions, whether right or wrong it matters not, to override all considerations of party allegiance."

## INNER LIFE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—NO. 300.

TRYING IT ON.

PARLIAMENT is up for the Easter holidays. Nothing, therefore, has been done in the House of Commons this week; but much was done at the latter end of last week, for on Thursday and Friday we had on the great debate of the Session, that important fight on which hung the fate of the Government bill—of the Government itself—and of the seats in Parliament of at least 150 members. Our readers, then, will think that we ought to notice the proceedings of these two nights. Let us begin at the beginning, and describe what we saw and, to some limited extent, report what we heard, on these two fateful evenings. It had got wind before the House met on Thursday that Earl Grosvenor would attempt to postpone the debate till after Easter, and as early as five o'clock the House was fuller than we ever saw it thus early in the evening. Indeed, it could not be fuller than it was then. To say that every place was occupied would give a poor idea of the cram and jam that we saw. Nothing but mechanical pressure could have got a dozen more members within the chamber, excepting always that open space between the speaker and the bar. That is always held to be sacred. Whatever may be the severity of the pressure, no man ever thinks of polluting that charmed square piece of floor. It is not fenced off by any material barrier; but only by tradition and custom—stronger than law. All the gangways, though, the space above the bar and that behind the Speaker's chair, were crowded, and through every doorway a group of members projected, looking over one another's shoulders. The House, then, was really full to overflowing, and of course, the members were excited and agitated. All crowds in the long run get excited. Friction, whether of mind or matter, begets heat; but here was something more than friction to generate fire. Every man had come down more or less igneous—the Conservatives less, the Liberals more, as we soon perceived. The former had come to support the noble Earl, perhaps honestly thinking that, on the whole, it would be better to have the discussion postponed; hoping, possibly, that in the calm of the recess some middle course might be covered, so as to render this fateful battle unnecessary. The Conservatives, we have long seen, are not over enthusiastic about the bill; they are evidently in their calm moments not quite sure of their ground. It is common to hear men in private express their doubts. "I shall, of course, support my party," said a genuine old Tory; "but I shall have to open my mouth wide and gulp hard to swallow this bill. It is a nasty choke-pear." And this feeling is not uncommon; and hence anxiety for delay. On the other side there are not a few who dislike Gladstone's proposal, not because it is too large, but because it is too small for their Radical cravings. "Let us have no delay about it." This was the prevailing sentiment on the Opposition side; and it was expressed so hotly and with such vigour of lungs that the Conservative chief—ever with his experienced eye open, looking out to see which way the wind blows—although it was shrewdly suspected that he had put up the noble Earl, had to throw his Lordship over, and to decide at once that the House should go into Committee and proceed with the bill. Shouts of cheers from the Liberals greeted this announcement, which seemed to indicate confidence of victory—which, if it existed, was destined to be sadly disappointed.

### THE FROTH DISPERSED.

Lord Grosvenor and his allies thwarted, the Speaker immediately left the chair. Mr. Dodson took his place at the table, and the Committee began to "consider the bill." When Mr. Speaker was seen to slide out of the chair, the froth of the House dispersed. By the froth we mean all those members who had come down to the House not for the serious business, but for the expected row and the possible division which might result from it; men who never stick to serious business—consider it, indeed, a bore—and only come here when they have nothing else to do, or when the inexorable clang of the whip summons them down to support their party, or when there is rumour of a row. These, as soon as the row was over, departed. True, Gladstone was about to speak—the greatest orator in the House—but what of that? They have no taste for oratory; in the House run upon horses, dogs, good runs, steeplechases, the next Derby, and the like. They will bet whilst lounging at the bar, and discuss the merits of the last steeplechase behind the Speaker's chair, though a Gladstone, Disraeli, or Bright may be speaking the while.

### GLADSTONE OPENS THE BALL.

The froth, then, dispersed, Mr. Gladstone began the debate, and delivered a speech which, if he had never made one before, would have placed him in the fore-front of modern orators. He was evidently in fine feather. His voice was musical as Apollo's lute; his diction was in his best style, not verbose and diffuse as it occasionally is, but compact and vigorous, though wonderfully eloquent. His argumentation was close, exhaustive, and convincing, if, indeed, there had been anybody present open to conviction. This, however, is questionable; for most of the members, if not all, had by this time made up, although they had not disclosed their minds, and Gladstone, with all his power, could do little more than confirm his followers in their predetermined course. The division afterwards showed that he had made no converts nor recalled any wanderers. But let us not say that this speech was made in vain. No earnest speech for truth is ever made in vain. Though Gladstone could not gain a vote in the division at the end of the debate, his arguments are lodged in the minds of his hearers, like good seed, and will ultimately bear fruit—perhaps this Session; but if not this, then in the future. But we venture to think that even this Session we may see results from this noble speech. Disraeli has won this battle; but before the Reform Bill can be made law there must be many more fights, and Gladstone's arguments may, and we think will, have power to modify and change the clauses yet to be discussed. Indeed, after hearing Mr. Gladstone's speech, most men must feel that the bill as it now stands never can become law.

### NISI PRIUS TALK.

The new Solicitor-General, Karslake, was put up to answer Gladstone. A fine, tall, handsome man is the Solicitor-General; and if an imposing form were all that is necessary to make an impressive speaker, Sir John Karslake would be a very impressive speaker indeed. But though an imposing form is a great advantage to a speaker—it prepossesses his audience in his favour if it does no more—there is much more that is necessary, as we all know. We were much prepossessed in Sir John Karslake's favour, and when he rose we set ourselves to listen to him; but we were soon satisfied. Sir John may be an excellent lawyer; of this we know nothing;—he may be a successful pleader at the bar; we suppose he is, or he could not have risen to be her Majesty's Solicitor-General; but he will never be an effective debater in the House of Commons. He seems to be acute in a small way—sharp to find out small flaws or apparent flaws; but he wants breadth. He cannot comprehend—that is, take in comprehensively—a great argument. A friend of ours described his speaking as *nisi prius*. Now, not being lawyers, we had but a hazy idea of the meaning of this term, and so we turned to our authority—"Fischer on the English Constitution"—and there we found a satisfactory explanation of the term. "The *Nisi Prius* Court," says our authority, "generally confines its jurisdiction to civil suits of a simple nature, where the question of fact and not the question of law is in dispute." At once we saw the applicability of the epithet. Sir John argues in the House as a lawyer would argue a small question of fact in a *Nisi Prius* Court; and here we may say that this is generally the vice of the style of most of the lawyers in the House of Commons. They deal with petty details rather than with large principles. They are what Carlyle calls fly critics, who settle upon a coign or a cornice, or some small flower in the capital of a pillar, and criticise it cleverly enough; but the vast building itself they can by no means comprehend. They are, though, not without their uses. They are useful in discovering faults and discrepancies in clauses of bills. They can patch and mend, too, if they cannot create. All lawyers, though, have not this fault. Sir Richard Bethell, now Lord Westbury, has a mind that can "comprehend" any subject; and so has Lord Cairns, and Sir Roundell Palmer, and Mr. Coleridge, and—last, not least—the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Alexander Cockburn; all of whom we have heard in the House of Commons.

### A RACY SPEECH.

What a curious study is old Master Henley! There is no such original as he in the House of Commons. In manners and speech he seems to belong to the past age rather than this; his manners are so simple, his speech so racy, and, we may add, his thoughts are so unsophisticated. We can only spare a small space for him, and we will fill up that with an extract from his speech. It is his description of the Small Tenements Act:—

He (Gladstone) described the Small Tenements Act as a great social and economical arrangement. Well, certainly it is a device of Old Nick to oppress the poor. That's what it is, and nothing else; because before that Act was passed, that portion of the people who were so poor and helpless as to come fairly under the name of residuum, paid no rates at all. But that Act says, if you build houses for the poor, rates must be paid for those houses. And therefore creatures however poor or helpless—even those receiving pauper's relief—are made to pay the rate through the landlord, who screws it out of them again as hard as he can in the rent. I wish this Act was swept away altogether. Its abolition would be a great blessing to the poor, though I admit people would have a little more trouble in collecting their rates.

### AN HONEST MAN.

We have picked out for special notice the Solicitor-General, because he is a new man; and Mr. Henley, because his speech was so racy and characteristic. The rest of the speakers of the night we must pass over, except Lord Cranbourne, to whom we must dedicate a few lines, because, though he is an old member, he occupied on this occasion quite a new position, and we will venture to say a more elevated position than he ever did before. "What!" we think we hear some readers say, "a more elevated position than he did when he was Secretary of State for India?" Yes! a more elevated position than that of Secretary of State for India. His Lordship then held office, which he had long been ambitious to possess. He had won golden opinions by the wisdom and ability with which he controlled his department. He had a salary of £5000 a year, a sum which could not be otherwise than acceptable to him, for remember he is not the possessor of, but only the heir to, an estate; and all this he gave up because he could not conscientiously support this Government Reform Bill. In short, he laid this splendid sacrifice of honour, power, wealth, on the altar of his conscience, and by so doing we venture to assert that he gained more honour and a higher position. It was singularly interesting to hear Lord Cranbourne pour out his plaints and confessions. What a contrast between his style now and that which he adopted last year! Then he vigorously assailed Mr. Gladstone's bill because it was too democratic; now he sorrowfully laments that he did not accept that measure, because now a measure still more democratic, as he thinks, has been proposed by his own friends. Some years ago Lord Cranbourne, in the *Quarterly Review*, said that Disraeli had the talent for leading his party into a ditch. The noble Lord has since seen a complete justification of this remark. The Conservative leader is now leading his party into another ditch, deep, filthy, and fatal; and he had hopes that he should wile his former bitter opponent, the noble Lord, into this ditch. But, to Cranbourne's honour be it spoken, he saw the ditch before him. He saw, too, that, if he took the leap, his honour would be soiled, his character lost; and promptly he recoiled, though he knew that he should sacrifice official distinction, fame as a successful ruler, and £5000 a year. We are not in the habit of bowing to our fellow-men, however high their rank may be; but we will cheerfully when we meet him in the streets lift our hat to the noble Lord as to one of the noblest works of God—an honest man.

### MANNER WITHOUT MATTER.

We now come to the second night of the debate. Mr. Roebuck led off. It has been said in the papers that, because he moved the adjournment of the debate on Thursday night, he got possession of the House for Friday. This is a mistake. A Committee of the whole House has no power to adjourn its own sitting or a debate to a future sitting. What it does is this. It orders, on the motion of a member, the Chairman to report progress and ask leave to sit again. Mr. Roebuck made the motion, but by so doing he did not get the right to begin the debate on the next day. However, at the proper time, he rose, caught the Chairman's eye, and began. His speech was quite characteristic. It was short, sharp, emphatic, and very acrid. He seemed to be boiling over with acrimony. Mr. Gladstone, at the beginning of his speech, mildly interposed a remark. Whereupon Roebuck turned round and, in his snappish way, said, like a querulous child, "I am sure the right hon. gentleman need not be angry with me." Then, further on, he called some one—name not mentioned, but undoubtedly Mr. Osborne—a jack-pudding; and when a groan came to his ears from behind him he snarled out, "That came from the member for Calne" (Mr. Lowe), who is, perhaps, the least likely man in the House to groan. Mr. Roebuck's manner of speaking, to strangers, is very striking. It was said of George Whitfield that he could set his congregation a-crying by the manner in which he pronounced the word Mesopotamia. Mr. Roebuck can utter the simplest commonplace in such an artistic and emphatic manner that he can produce, if not tears, loud cheers. But to those who have heard him a hundred times the trick fails—the manner becomes mannerism; and, instead of cheering, we are inclined to laugh.

### A HEAVY DEBATE.

From this time the wheels of the debate "drove heavily," as Gladstone the other night said of Disraeli's arguments. Indeed, on the whole, this has not been a very lively debate. Mr. W. E. Forster made a good argumentative speech from the fore front bench of the Opposition side, but it wanted life and colour. Indeed, how can any one get earnest and enthusiastic about a £5 rental? Then we had a succession of speeches all much in the same tone. Mr. Hunt followed Mr. Forster, and his speech was, like himself, ponderous, in the sense of heavy, but not momentous. John Locke

gave us a ten minutes' spurt of a run, as the foxhunters say; but after him came Mr. Liddell, and others, all dreary and dull. But, lo! Mr. Horsman is on his legs, and now we shall have the House wakened up. But, no; he, too, wonderful to relate, was dull, and what was more remarkable, short. But this, perhaps, though strange, is not unaccountable. Last year he made a swinging speech against all reform, and Gladstone's measure especially; now he has to accept and defend a measure almost exactly the same as that he then denounced. Gathorne Hardy's speech was of the rattling kind; but then it was like all his political speeches, little else but rattle. However, it delighted some of the Conservative gentlemen, and they cheered it loudly. Some men are but children of a larger growth, and these never cease to be fond of rattles. Mr. Bright followed Hardy, and, of course, we had something worth listening to; but neither was the hon. member for Birmingham on this occasion inspired. But what does this mean? Disraeli is up to bring the debate to a close. Will not, then, Mr. Lowe speak? Alas, no! How can he speak? He, like Horsman, last year unsparingly denounced Gladstone's measure as being too democratic, and now he must vote for it to defeat a bill which ultimately, he believes, will be more democratic still. He threw out the Liberal Government to save the country from the dire evils of democracy, and now he finds, as he thinks, that he has let in a Government which is positively revolutionary. Poor man! What, then, can he do but give a sulky and silent vote for the measure which last year he so emphatically condemned? Disraeli, too, was dull—ingenious and clever enough, but decidedly dull. Gladstone finished the debate.

And now the House is lively enough, for we are about to divide. But who is that man interposing himself between the impatient House and the division? It was Sir Henry Edwards, who wanted to get up a debate about Bernal Osborne's mare's nest, as Disraeli called the conference between Dillwyn and Co. and Colonel Taylor. What a blast of cries burst forth when Sir Henry rose! The impertinent man! does he think that we shall at this time of the morning listen to his gabble? "Down! down!" "Divide! divide!" assailed him from all parts of the House; nor could Brand, who was obliged to get up to explain his conduct in this paltry affair, get anything like a patient hearing. In short, the mare's nest was quickly blown into limbo, and the Chairman rose and the division went on. It is curious—unprecedented, indeed, in our experience—that up to the time when the tellers walked to the table nobody knew which side would win. We outsiders, though, discovered who had won before the victory was definitely announced. That wild uproar of yelling and cheering could only come from the Conservative side; for none but country gentlemen, used to hallooing by the roadside, could yell like that. And now there comes another burst, still wilder! The majority must be large, then. Twenty-one! By Jove! that is large. We can hardly be surprised that the shouting was so enthusiastic, nor that the frenzied Tories should dance, as they did in the outer lobby, like wild Indians. But just think of it, readers—Conservatives dancing and yelling for what, everybody knows, must be, if it be not now, household suffrage! What man ever dreamt that he should live to hear that?

## Imperial Parliament.

FRIDAY, APRIL 12.

### HOUSE OF LORDS.

After the Royal assent had been given by Commission to the Canada Rail way Loan Bill, the Criminal Lunatics Bill, and some other measures, the Judges' Chambers (Dispatch of Business) Bill and the Vice-Admiralty Courts Act Amendment Bill were read the third time and passed.

The Earl of MALMESBURY, replying to a question of Earl Russell, said that up to that afternoon no answer had been received from the Spanish Government to Lord Stanley's last despatch respecting the seizure of the Queen Victoria.

On the motion of the Earl of MALMESBURY, their Lordships adjourned, after a very short sitting, until Thursday, May 2.

### HOUSE OF COMMONS.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

The motion for the adjournment of the House until the 29th inst. was agreed to on the understanding that the debate on Mr. Gladstone's amendment would be brought to a conclusion that night.

#### THE REFORM BILL.

Preparatory to resuming in Committee of the whole House the adjourned debate on the question before the chair—namely, whether, in clause 3, words should be added giving the compound householder the franchise, "whether he in person or his landlord be rated to the relief of the poor," Mr. OSBORNE brought under notice a memorandum which, he said, had been made by Mr. Dillwyn, of a conversation which that hon. gentleman had had with Colonel Taylor (Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury), and the substance of which was that the hon. and gallant Colonel had expressed an opinion that an amendment of which Mr. Hibbert had given notice might be favourably entertained by Lord Derby and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Osborne inquired whether Colonel Taylor had been authorised by the Government to make this communication to Mr. Dillwyn, and whether it was intended to influence votes in the coming division. After some discussion, in the course of which it was stated that Colonel Taylor had met a severe accident, the Chancellor of the Exchequer characterised the whole affair as a "mare's nest," and warned gentlemen of the inconvenience and impropriety of scanning with too critical an eye the unreserved communication of hon. gentlemen out of the House.

Lord STANLEY wished it to be understood that the Government were about to resume the debate free and unpledged, and without any understanding with individual members as to any concession that might or might not be made. It was the wish of the Government, he said, that the vote should be taken upon its own merits alone.

The subject then dropped, and the adjourned debate was resumed by Mr. ROEBUCK, who gave it as his opinion that the proposition of the Government was more popular than that of Mr. Gladstone. The amendment of the latter was Conservative in its character, and the best proof of its being so was to be found in the circumstance that it had been supported by Lord Cranbourne. The object of all earnest reformers (not the rampant individuals who spouted Reform and acted 'Jack Pudding' before the House) was to get a bill in the course of the present Session, and, as he believed the best way to accomplish that object would be to support the Government, he would give his vote against the amendment.

Mr. BRERFORD-HOPE looked upon the bill as dangerous and democratic in principle, and predicted that the moment it received the Royal assent it would crush out the middle class and Americanise our institutions. With regard to the threat of dissolution, should the amendment be carried, it had no terrors for him; and sink or swim, dissolution or no dissolution, seat or no seat, he would vote against the "Asian mystery."

Mr. W. E. FORSTER admitted that, being a Radical Reformer, and having been in favour of household suffrage at a time when it had few friends, he would have been compelled to separate himself from his former colleagues and to vote for the bill of the Government if it was in reality based upon household suffrage. But the bill would not establish household suffrage; on the contrary, it would set up a rating suffrage. The measure would be good enough for twenty-nine boroughs where it would establish household suffrage; but it would establish an optional suffrage in 171 boroughs. The measure was hemmed in by absurd and obnoxious distinctions, and, so long as they continued, electioneering agitation would become chronic, while the public would insist upon the restrictions being swept away.

Mr. WARD-HUNT characterised the amendment as a crafty and subtle device for the purpose of uniting those who wished to defeat the bill, and who were not agreed as to the measure which ought to be substituted for it.

Mr. LOCKE defended the meeting in the tea-room (now called the "Tea Party"), and urged that if it had not been for the action taken by the fifty-two gentlemen who attended on that occasion the bill might never have got into Committee. He was prepared to support the amendment, but he frankly admitted that he could not support the other proposition of Mr. Gladstone in favour of drawing the line at a rental of £5 rental. He hoped, however, that, if defeated, the Government would accept the amendment with a good grace.

Mr. LIDDELL, as a sincere Conservative and anxious for a settlement of the question, was prepared to vote against all the amendments, on the ground that they were inconsistent and had two opposing meanings—indiscriminate admission and arbitrary exclusion.

The amendment was supported by Mr. Gilpin and Mr. Cowen, and opposed by Mr. Corrance and Mr. Dalglish—the latter observing that he had been one of the "Tea Party," and that they were all sincere Reformers and wanted to see a bill passed in the present Session and by the present Government.

Mr. HUBBARD expressed the regret he felt at being compelled to vote against the Government, because he considered their bill meant household suffrage, and to that he had an invincible objection.

Mr. HORSMAN (who spoke from the front bench of the Opposition) owned that he was in favour of fixing the line at a £5 rental, and that, in his



opinion, five sixths of the House (including the vast majority of the Opposition) would be better pleased with it than with the plan of the Government. The country wanted an honest and speedy settlement of the question; and, as he believed the amendment would tend to make the principle of the measure simple and intelligible, he would give it his hearty support.

Mr. G. HARDY, in an able speech, defended the measure of the Government, contending that it would admit every man to the franchise who cared to possess it, and who proved himself to be worthy of it by bearing the burdens of citizenship. He asserted that the bill contained within it the elements of a permanent settlement. The amendment of Mr. Gladstone aimed at the destruction of the Government measure; and he, for one, as a responsible Minister of the Crown, did not consider it consistent with his honour to accept it, because it struck at the very principle of the bill.

Mr. BRIGHT replied chiefly to the remarks of the last speaker, contending that, as the members of the Government had advanced so far on the road to Reform, and had broken down so many of the barriers of party, they ought to concede a little more and accept the amendment. He called upon them in this, the supreme hour of the question, to grapple with it with the wisdom of statesmanship, and to act with that generosity which belonged to all the great statesmen of the country.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER observed that the House had to consider a contrary policy and a counter proposition. The issue raised in the amendment involved a principle at variance with that on which the measure of the Government was based. He did not believe that the guards and restrictions to which exception had been taken would prevent eligible persons from possessing the franchise. Many of the inconveniences which the Opposition now foresaw would disappear as the classes whom it was proposed to elevate in the social scale would adapt themselves to the altered circumstances of the case, and men who were not now in the enjoyment of the franchise would hasten to obtain it. Having deprecated the party tactics of the leader of the Opposition (who had, he said, had his innings), the right hon. gentleman stated that, while the Government looked upon the personal payment of rates and adequate residential occupation as the only basis upon which the borough franchise should rest, they were quite prepared to consider other amendments, including the difficult one of the lodger franchise. They wished for the mutual co-operation of the House; but the leader of the Opposition, instead of meeting them in that spirit, had declared war to the knife.

Mr. GLADSTONE replied in a short speech, in the course of which he reiterated his chief objections to the bill, and declared that any measure founded upon personal rating would fail to settle the question, and would be unworthy the attention of Parliament.

The House divided at half-past one o'clock, when the numbers were—  
For the amendment of Mr. Gladstone .. .. 289  
Against .. .. 310

Majority for Ministers .. .. 21  
The result was hailed with immense cheers by the Ministerial side. The Chairman immediately afterwards reported progress, and the House resumed.  
The other business was disposed of, and the House adjourned till April 29.

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#### PARLIAMENT AND THE GAS COMPANIES.

GAS is such a formidable nuisance, especially when it is supplied to us, as it generally is, in a very impure state, that people do not feel quite so much shocked as they ought at the proposition now before Parliament to confiscate the property of thirteen gas companies. It is the sort of thing that the Emperor Nicholas, in his own despotic country, would scarcely have ventured to do; but Parliament, with all due observance of forms, can be as tyrannical as any absolute Sovereign; and there really seems to be some chance of its adopting a measure which would, we repeat, be one simply of confiscation.

If Parliament would render it penal to introduce gas into a dwelling-house, however droll such a piece of legislation might be, it would at least be beneficial in a sanitary point of view. Gas has its victims as well as alcohol, though hitherto no societies have been formed the members of which pledge themselves to abstain totally from its use. We shall get to that in time, no doubt, as civilisation advances. In the meanwhile the natural indignation caused by the bad quality of the gas supplied by the companies ought not to prevent a protest being entered by all honest persons against the course now being pursued towards them by the Government. It was decided some months ago, either to place the gas companies under the control of the Board of Works or to give the Board authority to purchase the properties of the companies at a certain arbitrarily fixed rate. It has actually been proposed that the amount to be paid as purchase money "should not, in any case, exceed a fixed charge of 6 per cent on the present paid-up ordinary capital of the companies, the holders of which are now entitled to, and in receipt of, a dividend of 10 per cent." If the companies decline to sell, their position will be even worse, for they will be bound to the Board by obligations impossible to fulfil. In fact, the object of the bill now before Parliament is clearly to compel them to sell, and, as we have before explained, at a loss of two fifths on the actual value of their property.

The Gas Bill has not yet met with the attention in Parliament which, from the importance of the principle involved, it undoubtedly deserves. The companies, however, have defended themselves in a memorandum which we suppose has been placed in the hands of members, and which must suffice to convince everyone, except, perhaps, the officials of the Board of Works, that the proposed measure is thoroughly unjust, and that it would form a very dangerous precedent if, unfortunately, it should become law. The companies possess their undertakings under the sanction of Acts of the Legislature. They were founded on the principle of private enterprise, and under the faith of a Parliamentary guarantee they have expended a capital of between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 sterling. If it be true that they have not uniformly furnished their customers with the best possible gas, they are, nevertheless, not accused of

having committed a single breach of their Parliamentary obligations. Moreover, as London was the first city supplied with gas, the metropolitan companies had to encounter all the risks incident to an entirely new system of lighting, and have had to contend with the difficulties by which it was for a long time encompassed. It is only within the last few years that they have been reaping the fruits of a fifty-years' enterprise; and it does seem monstrous that when success is no longer doubtful the right of supplying London with gas should be taken away from the companies by a forced sale, and handed over to the Metropolitan Board of Works.

It is not, be it understood, positively insisted upon that the gas companies shall part with their property. The Board will be content to direct their affairs for them, and to regulate the quantity, quality, and price of the gas supplied; but the memorandum of the gas companies shows that the observance of the rules suggested by the Metropolitan Board would "not only take away every shilling of profit derived from the manufacture of gas throughout the metropolis, but would leave an annual deficit of £153,014." However, if the companies do not like to sacrifice themselves on this horn of the dilemma, they can impale themselves on the other one—that of a forced sale, by which every shareholder in a gas company would lose precisely two fifths of all his income derived from that source. This proposition is not only shamefully unjust in itself, it opens the way to abuses of the gravest kind; and there is no saying what effect so flagrant a breach of Parliamentary faith might not have upon securities of every description. If Parliament assumes to itself the right of confiscating the property of the metropolitan gas companies, gas companies in other parts of the kingdom will naturally not feel safe. They will, in fact, be at the mercy of every local board that may be seized with an ambitious desire to imitate the Metropolitan Board of Works. Nor will Parliamentary guarantees be considered more valuable for one class of property than for another. The memorandum points out that there are about 1100 gas companies, probably half that number of water companies, and about 600 railway companies, besides numerous other companies, all founded on the principle of private enterprise, and equally interested in the faith of Parliament being maintained.

The first injustice which it is proposed to commit is to force the gas companies to supply gas under the direction of the Board of Works, and at losing prices. The second is to relieve them from this impossible position by taking their property off their hands at three fifths of its value. But this is not all. An attack upon the pockets of the public, as well as upon those of the gas companies, seems to be meditated. For suppose the forced sale, for which the Board of Works is so desirous, to be carried out; then, if the Board furnishes the public with gas on the conditions that it wishes to impose upon the companies it will find itself saddled with an annual deficit of £153,014, to which must be added £360,000 for the interest of six per cent on a share capital of six millions sterling. Thus there would be a total annual loss of £513,014, to be raised by taxation on the ratepayers of the metropolis. And this, as is well put in the memorandum, "in order that the Metropolitan Board may undertake the manufacture of gas and deprive the companies of four tenths of their statutory profits."

Nothing can be fairer than that the companies should be required to supply gas of a certain purity. Let Parliament keep faith with them, and let them keep faith with the public. But we cannot understand what the public would gain by the whole gas supply of the metropolis being transferred to an irresponsible administrative body. When our Government departments distinguish themselves by a superior mode of doing their own business, it will be time enough to think of intrusting them with the business of others. At present it is very difficult to understand why a number of families should be half ruined merely that increased occupation, and with it increased patronage, may be furnished to the Board of Works.

MR. C. BUXTON, M.P. for East Surrey, has been prevented attending at the House of Commons since Tuesday week, when he met with an accident while hunting with the Hon. F. Petre's stag-hounds. He unfortunately dislocated his jaw, and has been confined to his bed ever since. The hon. member is progressing favourably.

MR. GLADSTONE AND REFORM.—Mr. Gladstone has sent the following letter to Mr. E. W. Brooks, in reply to a vote of confidence which had been passed in his leadership by the Guildford Reform Association:—"11, Carlton House-terrace, April 13, 1867. Sir,—I beg to acknowledge with gratitude the letter and resolution you have been good enough to address to me. You will have observed the division last night, and it will probably lead you to an altered estimate of any power possessed by me to improve the Reform Bill of the Government. I beg, however, to assure you that my attachment to the great end in view is unaltered."

THE LODGER FRANCHISE.—The adjourned annual meeting of the London Working Men's Association was held, on Tuesday evening, at Radley's Hotel, Bridge-street, Blackfriars.—Mr. G. Potter in the chair. After the discussion of the routine business of the association, the following resolutions were moved by Mr. Smith, bootmaker, and seconded by Mr. Broadhurst, mason:—"That this association deeply regrets the result of the division on the Reform Bill, on Saturday morning last, by which the vicious principle of personal rating is confirmed, and still more regrets that this result was brought about by a secession from the Liberal ranks. That this association now, more than ever, are convinced that the great majority of the House of Commons have no desire to pass a Reform Bill satisfactory to the people; and, in the event of the bill passing through Parliament in its present shape—requiring a personal payment of rates and a residential qualification of two years, with the omission of a lodger franchise—this association hereby pledges itself to a continued and increased agitation until personal payment of rates is abolished, the term of residence reduced, and the principles of residential and registered manhood suffrage, protected by the ballot, be acknowledged by the Legislature. That this association is strongly opposed to the drawing of any arbitrary line of rating—whether £5 or any other sum—below which householders shall not be admitted to the franchise; and trust that Mr. Gladstone will not persevere in any such amendment, but will devote his energies to obtain a reduction in the residential term of qualification, and the insertion of a lodger franchise." Messrs. Gilmore, Edbrooke, Scott, Horne Pardee, and others, supported the resolutions; which were opposed by Messrs. Tronp, Westoby, and Bristow; and carried, with three dissentients. The chairman announced that the association had engaged St. Martin's large hall, for a meeting in support of the lodger franchise, on the Friday in Easter week.

#### SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

HER MAJESTY has signified her intention of publicly opening the Albert Orphan Asylum, Collingwood Court, Bagshot, Surrey, in June next, and at the same time of laying the foundation-stone of a dining-hall and chapel.

PRINCESS CHRISTIAN, on Sunday afternoon, gave birth to a son at Windsor. At latest accounts both the mother and the child were doing well.

THE EX-QUEEN OF NAPLES is said to be dangerously ill with an affection of the chest. She is recommended to quit Rome without delay. In all probability she will proceed to Switzerland.

THE KING OF THE BELGIANS, who is at present in Paris, goes about the city like ordinary curious strangers. He lives in Count Walewski's hotel, incognito in every way, the Count and his family being at St. Germain.

THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA has restored to the collateral heirs of General Kiss—who was executed on Oct. 6, 1842, at Arad, with thirteen other Generals of the national army, amongst whom were Nagy Sandor, Torok, and Count Vecsey—the whole of his property, confiscated to the State during the revolution, and valued at about 4,500,000 florins. This act will, it is said, be followed by others of a similar character.

PRINCE CHARLES THEODORE OF BAVARIA, brother of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, has just taken holy orders. Grief at the loss of his wife is said to have led to that determination.

THE BISHOP OF EXETER wishes it to be known that he will not accept any nomination by a clerical patron of himself to a living, unless the patronage has accrued to him by gift or succession.

MR. THOMAS NEWMAN HALL has been elected governor, and Mr. Robert Wigram Crawford deputy-governor, of the Bank of England.

MR. ROBERT BELL, well known as the author of many books, and as a journalist, died on Friday week. He had suffered from a long illness, and was confined to his bed for about three months before his death.

MR. LABOUCHERE, nephew of Lord Taunton and son of the late Mr. John Labouchere, banker, was on Monday elected for Middlesex, in the room of Mr. Culling Hanbury, deceased. There was no opposition, and the result occasions no alteration in the relative position of political parties.

THE REV. THOMAS CLAUGHTON, Vicar of Kidderminster, has been appointed by Lord Derby to the bishopric of Rochester.

MR. BRAND, it is reported, has acted for the last time as whip for the Liberal party, and that after Easter Mr. Grenfell Glyn will take the duties of the office.

INCENDIARY FIRES are becoming of frequent occurrence in Buckinghamshire, several having occurred within the last few days. Two or three labourers have been apprehended on suspicion of being the incendiaries.

THE JAMAICA COMMITTEE, it is said, have resolved to prosecute Mr. Eyre for misdeemeanour, under the provisions of the Colonial Governors Act.

ARCHBISHOP MANNING has obtained of the Pope an indulgence of one year to all who shall devoutly recite the Gloria Patri and Ave Maria with the intention of obtaining from God the perfect conversion of the English nation to the obedience of the faith and reconciliation to the chair of St. Peter.

ALDERSHOT was a village containing 500 inhabitants before the military camp was established there. It has now 7000 inhabitants.

MR. EYRE has received several substantial offers of pecuniary assistance to enable him to commence an action for malicious prosecution against the Jamaica Committee. The offers have, however, been courteously but decisively refused.

THE AMERICAN YACHTS *Henrietta*, *Fleetwing*, and *Vesta*, which have been laid up at Cowes during the winter, are about to be fitted out to go to sea for the summer season.

CANNING'S STATUE, by Westmacott, in New Palace-yard, Westminster, will, in the course of a day or two, be removed from its present site (the spot on which it stands being required by the Metropolitan Railway) to an obscure vacant piece of ground in the rear, in close proximity to the Westminster Sessions-house.

MR. EDWARD WHYMPER, the Matterhorn climber, and Mr. John Brown, the Rocky Mountain botanist, have started from Copenhagen on a tour through the interior of Greenland. This expedition has been organised solely in the interest of science, and the expenses are to be defrayed from private sources.

IN CANADA there are seventy-three gold-mines, employing 708 miners. The yield of gold for the last three months is valued at £138,191.

THE FOUR-HORSE COACH TO BRIGHTON, which was established last year, started on Monday on its first journey this season. So successful was the enterprise that it is intended the coach shall travel daily (Sundays excepted), instead of every other day.

AN ACT has just been printed to open the professorships of anatomy and surgery, chemistry, and botany, in the Dublin University, irrespective of religious creed. The professorships are open to persons of all nations, and any difficulty on account of religion is removed.

MR. WILLIAM J. O'BRIEN, second son of the late William Smith O'Brien, and nephew to Lord Inchiquin, is dead. He was hunting, and received an accident by a fall from his horse, which was not taken much notice of at the time, but shortly after he was confined to bed, and died on the 8th inst., in the 28th year of his age.

THE ACCIDENT WHICH BEFELL COLONEL TAYLOR, M.P., on Friday week, arose while the hon. and gallant gentleman was opening a soda-water bottle. The cork flew out and hit him in the ball of the eye, inflicting great pain and injury, which, however, is only likely to be temporary.

TWO BOYS IN THE ST. AUSTELL UNION WORKHOUSE each swallowed eighteen marbles a few days ago. One of the boys said he swallowed the marbles because he was hungry. The boys are looking pale, but are not much the worse for the experiment.

THE DEMOLITION OF DOCTORS'-COMMONS has commenced, and the ancient Court of Admiralty and the places where the ecclesiastical courts were held, will shortly be cleared for the new street from Blackfriars to the Mansion House.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE COCKBURN'S charge to the grand jury at the Central Criminal Court, in the cases of the "Queen against Nelson and Brand," is to be published in a few days, revised and corrected by the Lord Chief Justice, with the addition of notes. It will be edited by Frederick Cockburn, Esq., of the Crown Office.

THE FACTORY OF ST. ETIENNE has just delivered 60,000 needle-guns to the French Minister of War. The establishment is said to be in a position to be able to claim the premium of 50,000*fr.* offered by the Government for the completion of 100,000 rifles by the end of April.

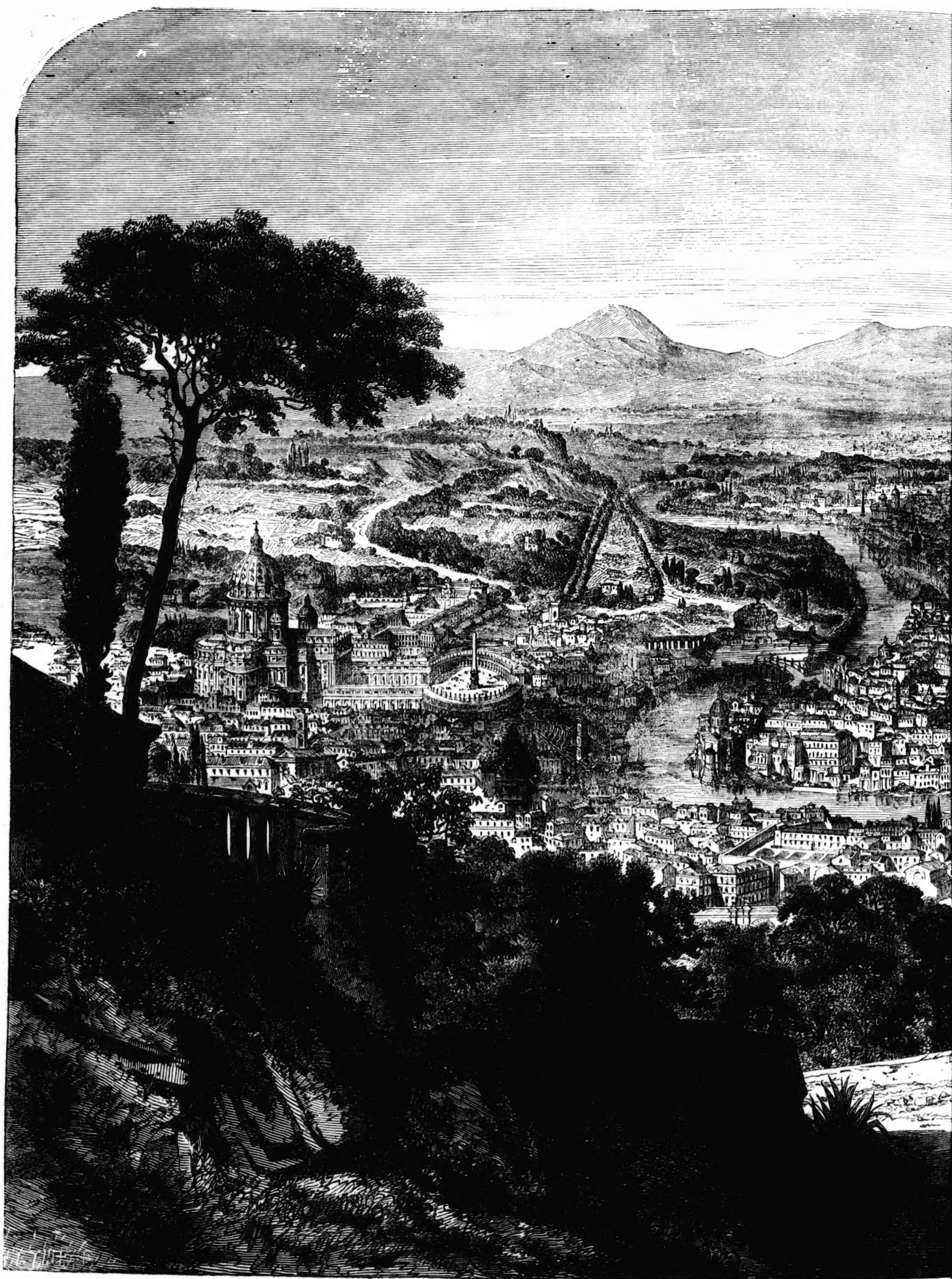
MR. F. B. CHATTERTON, lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, has taken initiatory proceedings to bring an action against Mr. Sims Reeves, for damages for breach of contract, the latter gentleman having declined to appear in the drama of "Rob Roy," for which he was engaged for twelve special representations.

THE JOURNEMEN HAIRDRESSERS AT PARIS have struck for an increase of wages, and, in particular, to cease work at eight in the evening on week days and four in the afternoon on Sundays. The masters, it is said, would not object to this reduction of time on the Sunday, but refuse positively to accede to the condition concerning the other six days.

MR. THOMAS VARDON, for nearly forty years librarian at the House of Commons, died a few days ago. The deceased gentleman was highly respected by a wide circle of friends, whose friendship had arisen by connection with him in the House of Commons. His urbanity of manners was appreciated by all who had intercourse with him. The appointment of his successor rests with the Speaker of the House of Commons, who, it is said, intends to confer the post on his brother, Mr. Alfred Denison, who has for some time been his secretary. The salary is £1000 a year, with a residence in the palace.

THE LATE STORMS.—On Sunday last it blew a heavy gale in London and its neighbourhood; indeed, the squalls were occasionally so strong that they had the force of a hurricane. Accounts of the effects of the gale, in this and last week, have also been received from all parts of the coasts, where the storm has been severely felt; but, fortunately, hardly any loss of life has taken place, on account of the continued prompt services of the life-boats, the rocket apparatus, and other means. On Monday last the Swanes life-boat, named the Wolverhampton, belonging to the National Life-boat Institution, rendered most important services to the brig *Wellington*, of Aberystwith, and her crew. The life-boat afterwards assisted, in conjunction with a steam-tug, in bringing the vessel, which was in a dangerous position in Swansea Bay, safely into harbour. The Lytham life-boat, named the Wakefield, also belonging to the National Life-boat Institution, was the means, after much difficulty, of bringing safely into harbour the barque *A. L. Routh*, of New York, and her crew of fourteen men, which vessel had stranded on the Saltoussie sandbank. The life-boat Robert William, stationed at Blackpool, was also instrumental in rescuing the crew of fourteen men from the barque *Susan L. Campbell*, of Waghmouth, Nova Scotia, which was totally wrecked on the same bank. The life-boat Birmingham, stationed at Sutton, on the coast of Lincolnshire, also rendered good service to the *Mary*, of Lynn, bound from that port to Stockton with a cargo of wheat, which vessel had stranded on a sandbank. The life-boat stationed at Skerries, near Dublin, rendered most important assistance to the brig *Mary*, of Wokington, which, during a strong gale of wind, was found to be in a perilous position near the Skerries, her cargo having shifted in one of the heavy squalls, which had laid the vessel on her broadside and had caused a quantity of water to be shipped in the cabin before her anchors were let go. It may be added, as a gratifying and encouraging fact, that, during the storms of the past three months, the life-boats of the National Life-boat Institution have rescued 357 lives from different wrecks on our coasts.









ROME AS IT IS.



### THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

It is difficult to resist the feeling that the best comedy of the day, or that has been produced for a long time, is the one lately performed in Westminster under the title of "Amending the Representation of the People." The piece seems to be highly popular at St. Stephen's; for it has run almost nightly—with various important modifications—since the 5th of February, and will again be revived after the holidays, to be repeated day by day, according to announcement, till the end of the Session. To begin with, it was not a little farcical to find the Tory party, the leading point in whose creed was opposition to all reform, undertaking to carry such a measure. The sudden conversion of these gentlemen to democratic notions was a most comical exhibition; for it is impossible to believe in the genuineness of the operation, which is palpably due, not to real change of sentiment, but to pressure from without, and to "coward fear" of the consequence which their own stupid obstinacy had provoked. Then their twistings and turnings, their writhings and wriggings to conceal their uncomfortable feelings, and their unwilling action, were mirth-provoking in an eminent degree. The vacillation and infirmity of purpose on the part of the leaders, and the uncertainty, amazement, and confusion among the followers, had a true dash of the comical element in them. The fun deepened as the drama proceeded; and, to an unconcerned spectator, became really intense when Mr. Disraeli delivered his great "conciliation" speech, wherein he appeared to yield everything and yet conceded nothing. The plot of the piece then became apparent even to the most opaque-minded of his followers, who began to have the laugh on their side, when they discovered that the whole affair was a juggle and a trick—a regular Macbeth witches sort of performance, paltering with the subject in a double sense, the object being not to extend the suffrage, but to readjust the privilege of voting so as to secure a majority for Mr. Disraeli's own side. The fun, of course, consisted in humbugging the public into a belief that large concessions were being made to the popular demands, while the "Constitutional party" were persuaded that no concessions were being made at all. Hence the adoption of the comical device of the double voice—Mr. Disraeli proclaiming household suffrage to one side of the House, and Mr. Hardy, Lord Stanley, and Sir Stafford Northcote declaring that there was to be no such thing to the other. This game of "puzzle my neighbour" was genuinely comical. But the farcical element culminated—reached the "screaming" point, in fact—when those two notable deputations to the versatile Chancellor appeared upon the stage. First, on a memorable Saturday, came a deputation from Lancashire, who professed to represent the opinions of the majority of the inhabitants of that province, and particularly of Manchester, of all places in the world, to send forth Tory spokesmen. But when, where, how, or by whom said representatives of opinion in Lancashire were appointed, nobody to this hour yet knows. Certainly, it was not in the usual way, at gatherings of the people in "public meeting assembled," for no such public meetings were ever heard of. But the crowning bit of farce—positively side-splitting that was—consisted in the performance, on the following Monday, between Mr. Disraeli and the deputation of "genuine, unmistakable working men." There was no surpassing that scene; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has as keen an appreciation of wit and humour as any man in England, must have had great difficulty in restraining his risible tendencies during the performance, and I am sure indulged in a hearty guffaw directly he found himself alone. Working men and Constitutional associations! Why, there were very few present who could call themselves working men in the ordinary signification of the phrase. There were barristers, solicitors, manufacturers, mill managers, brassfounders' overseers, and (we have it on the authority of one of their confrères) clerks in Government offices! But genuine working men—bah! next to none. As for these "Conservative" and "Constitutional" associations, they are never heard of except in paragraphs in the Tory newspapers recording banquets at which the speakers are invariably "gentlemen," and not handworkers at all. I hope the paying as well as the speaking at these banquets falls to the share of the "gentlemen." That, too, must be good fun for those who eat but are not called upon to pay the bill. Then, as all plays must have an underplot, that was not wanting in the great Reform farce; and, of course, said underplot was intensely vulgar and tricky. Colonel Taylor played the Jeremy Diddler rôle, and Messrs. Dillwyn and Co. that of the gulls. The gallant Colonel's "accident," which prevented his presence to explain the interesting "episode" of Friday night week, but did not hinder him from voting the same night, was a masterly bit of low comedy, at which he and his associates must have laughed comically among themselves. But while all this is admirable fooling to the performers, I wonder how long the audience—that is, the nation at large—are expected to endure this trifling with a serious and important question in which they are presumed to take a lively interest. Surely the farce is becoming somewhat tiresome to them, and the actors not a little contemptible in their eyes. There can be no doubt of this, I think, that the majority of the members of the House of Commons do not really wish for Reform; and that all the farcical exhibition at St. Stephen's is simply designed to conceal the fact and to stave the business off for a time. In that case, what are we to think of "honourable" gentlemen who condescend to such pitiful trickery? Mr. Lowe, Lord Cranbourne, Mr. Beresford Hope, and a few others, who declare against all change, on the one hand; and Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, and their immediate friends, on the other, are the only really straightforward men in the House; at least I cannot help thinking so. We know what they mean; but as for all the rest—so-called Liberals and Conservatives—they must be arrant hypocrites.

Does the following advertisement, which appeared in the *Times* on Tuesday, represent a real case, or is it a dodge by an impostor? If the first, it is a disgrace to the richest ecclesiastical institution in the world that one of its ministers should be reduced to such straits as to have to resort to so degrading a shift as barefaced begging; and if the last, the Church authorities should expose the impostor. You published a paragraph last week showing a portion of the savings left by Irish prelates, besides living in splendour during their lives. I suppose the English hierarchy are not worse off than their Irish brethren; and if so, ought curates to be left to starve or to send round the hat in this way?

A poor curate, with eight children, is in urgent need of £200 to help him in his present difficulties. The following contributions most gratefully received:—£5 from H. T.; £5 from S. R. For particulars address M. A., care of W. Stevens, Esq., 8, Gloucester-place, Brighton.

The Art-Journal Catalogue of the French Exhibition was presented, on Sunday last, to the Emperor at the Tuileries by Mr. S. C. Hall, the editor, who was very graciously received. The Emperor showed great interest in the work, and observed that when complete it would be a splendid volume.

I have just received a little book which is likely to be of service to everybody with a taste for jewellery and a habit of making presents. It consists of about twenty small and elegantly-printed pages, will take about eleven minutes to read, and is entitled "Hints to Purchasers of Jewellery on the Relative Value of the Different Qualities of Gold." As it is written by the manager of the firm of Hancock, Burbrook, and Co., its accuracy may be relied on; in fact, it is simply a few words which might be addressed by any friendly jeweller to an acquaintance who wanted to know something of the mystery of alloy, hall marks, standard and other gold of different values, with one or two other subjects of general interest, of which most of us are entirely ignorant. The next time I go to order a suite of jewels or a gold dinner service I shall certainly take this little work in a breast pocket.

### THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

Nobody expects magazine or newspaper articles to be printed—few people expect them invariably to be written—without mistakes. Dean Alford, who himself seldom "nods," is the only writer I can remember who has said (the passage to which I refer on the strength of my memory occurs in the "Queen's English") that a slip in a newspaper article is deserving of anything like serious condemnation. Any remark of that kind is sufficient proof

that the author is without experience in the activities of literature, and utterly inapt to conceive the thousands of ways in which mishaps occur that affect the construction of sentences. I can only say that in my personal experience, which has included quarterly and monthly magazines and newspapers and reviews of all ranks, including the best, I have found in my own printed matter errors (I do not mean mere breaches of gracefulness of expression or mere violations of schoolmaster-routine of style) and dislocations as unaccountable as any live frog in the ooze that ever set geological quidnunc gaping. Sometimes it is one's own bad writing; sometimes it is the compositor; sometimes it is the printer's reader; sometimes it is the editor; sometimes, and most frequently, indeed, it is the—familiar of Dr. Faustus himself. In a book of mine recently printed, I have only just now, by the merest chance in the world, found two alterations evidently made by that familiar at the very last moment—one of them making bad English out of good, the other making nonsense. But, if we must all bear such things with patience, and find excuses for them, we are not bound to excuse such a blunder as I am now going to quote from an announcement on the cover of the new "Illustrated Edition of the Novels and Tales of George Eliot" (Blackwood):—"Each number will contain a highly-finished engraving, executed under the direction of Mr. J. D. Cooper, by a selection of able Artists." This is not only wrong, it is absurd; and yet the "edition" has been long advertised, so that one would suppose the notification to have been deliberately written. Of the "edition" itself I am able to speak in terms of strong praise. Each number contains sixty-four pages; the print is large and clear, and the name of Mr. Cooper is a guarantee for the excellence of the illustrations. Mr. W. Small's sketch of Mr. Burge's workshops in the first number would have been better than it is (and it is good) if he could have forgotten Mr. Du Maurier. But, surely, Messrs. Blackwood, at the rate of once a month, this issue will take a long time? Why not once a fortnight?—or, a concurrent issue of, say, two of the novels together, for those who would like to spend a shilling a month in capital, convenient editions of standard works? Think it over, gentlemen!

### THE THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

It would be sheer affectation—not to put a stronger epithet to it—if I were to pretend to you that I had been lounging at any theatre during the past week. In point of fact I haven't been inside a theatre since last Monday week. There is no novelty whatever; but, as a set-off to that, there is plenty of novelty to come. Easter is to be unusually rich in new pieces, and, for want of better work to do, I may as well recapitulate the principal novelties that are promised us.

*Imprimis*, DRURY LANE is to have a new comedy-drama by Mr. Halliday, to be called "The Great City," and which will have the advantage of the name of Miss Madge Robertson in the cast. Miss Robertson returns to town with a famous provincial reputation.

THE HAYMARKET will, on April 24, produce a new piece by Mr. Wallack, edited by Mr. Dion Boucicault, called "A Wild Goose." Mr. Sothorn is to play the principal male part. This theatre has, unfortunately, lost the services of Miss Nelly Moore; it is a loss that the management will have much difficulty in repairing.

THE ADELPHI, with Mr. Clarke in its bills, announces a new farce, called "A Fretful Porcupine."

THE LYCEUM announces a divertissement by M. Espinosa, to be called "The Satyr."

THE PRINCESS'S closes at Easter, and reopens on May 11 with "Antony and Cleopatra," with Miss Glynn in the part of Cleopatra.

THE OLYMPIC has a burlesque, by Mr. Burnard, called "Olympic Games."

THE ST. JAMES'S has a drama, by Mr. George Roberts, founded on a novel by Ouida, and called "Idalia," in which Mr. Wyndham, from the Royalty, will appear.

THE STRAND has a burlesque, by Mr. W. Brough, called "Pygmalion; or, the Statue Fair."

THE ROYALTY and the HOLBORN are doing so well with "Black-Eyed Susan" and "Flying Scud" respectively that no change in the programme is at present necessary.

There! That's all.

### THE LOUNGER AT THE STUDIOS.

AMID the convulsions of the Reform Bill debates, and the twenty other important affairs of the day, the artistic world has kept on its busy way, and the quiet industry of the studios has been undisturbed by any question save that great and momentous one that presented itself to each artist as he stood before his easel, "Shall I get my picture done in time?"

That question has been irrevocably answered by this time, and the materials for the Royal Academy display are safely housed in Trafalgar-square, committed to the tender mercies of the hanging committee. Taking a general view of what has been done this year, I think we shall have a good exhibition—at any rate, a better one than last year. As far as one can judge at present, the chief peculiarity of the show will be the unusual number of large canvases; as if Art meant to foreshadow the general election that must come after the Reform Bill, in order to prove she is not quite regardless of politics.

Most of the R.A.s will be to the fore with pictures. Sir Edwin Landseer will bring more than the four lions to Trafalgar-square this year. Mr. Millais will exhibit his large "Jephtha," and Mr. Frith will give us "Charles II. on his last Sunday." Mr. Watts is to exhibit an "Eve." Mr. Leighton, a "Venus," with other smaller canvases. Mr. Ward has gone to Shakespeare for a subject, and is to present his notion of "Juliet's Visit to Friar Laurence's Cell," not, as the *Guardian* has it, "Friar Laurence's Visit to Juliet's Cell." Mr. Cooke has painted a very striking picture—a stranded whale, or rather its skeleton, lying on the sea-beach. Mr. Stanfield has selected the sea off the coast of Heligoland for his subject this year.

Mr. Mason has managed to tear himself away from his "Girl and Goose," and will be seen to advantage in a large twilight landscape, with figures—villagers on their road from church across a wide common. Mr. Calderon, who, with a few brother-artists, took a season for study at Haver, gives a spirited picture of the return of a knight, after a victory—say, Bosworth—to his ancestral halls and his expectant family. A small twilight landscape may also be expected from him. Mr. Walker has, I believe, completed his "Bathers;" and, in that case, will contribute one of "the" pictures of the year.

Mr. Armytage has selected an incident in the life of Savonarola; Mr. Yeames has chosen the distribution of copies of the Bible by Wyckliffe to the travelling friars. The latter artist will also exhibit a smaller subject—a boy punished for some youthful delinquency by condemnation to "Bread and Water." Mr. Wynfield has painted "The Last Moments of Oliver Cromwell"—a picture which is likely to attract attention. He has also finished another subject, a crafty old "John o' the Scales" getting some unthrifty "Heir of Lynne" to a bill.

Mr. Hodson has elected to give us a version of "Evensong"—a gathering of godly medievals in a grand old cathedral, where the sunset pours in through pictured panes. Mr. Leslie illustrates the song of "Willow," which a fair but forlorn maiden sings by a willow-bed. Mr. Houghton's choice has fallen on the two first Flemish martyrs—two little chorister lads, who are being sternly interrogated by a council of monks. Mr. Henley goes to Wittenburg for his subject—"Grandfather's Visit," a hale old German peasant, pipe in mouth, calling on his daughter to see the baby that has just conferred on him the honourable title of "grandad."

Mr. Marks has painted "Falstaff's Own" as it marches in all its raggedness over a common, headed by Sir John's ancient Pistol, who is also the chief personage in Mr. E. C. Barnes's picture, wherein Fluellen is compelling him to devour the detested leek. Mr. Barnes has treated the subject with originality and humour.

Mr. Tourrier will be represented by "Matins"—a string of monks hurrying through the snow to early service. Mr. Roberts has painted the old Jew of "Our Mutual Friend" tending his garden on the roof. Mr. Watson has treated "A Lovers' Quarrel" in a new

way, and Mr. Fitzgerald has also struck out a novelty. Mr. C. Nicholls has sent in a scene from "The Corsair;" Mr. H. Moore has painted a vigorous and striking picture of sea and sky, and Mr. Leader has depicted autumn in a valley of pines. Mr. Vicat Cole has chosen a marine subject this year. Mr. E. A. Pettitt has revisited the Alps for his canvas. Mr. Smythe, whose picture of French market girls attracted attention last year, has painted a group of children coming along a sunny walk, which is likely to sustain the repute of 1866.

In spite of the extra week of grace at the beginning of April, there are several artists, I fear, who have been unable to complete their pictures by sending-in day. Mr. Fisk is among them, with a carefully-studied "Feast of Tabernacles."

### ROME.

MYSTERIOUS intimations reach us from Rome which would seem to indicate that some sort of movement is imminent in the Eternal City. A telegram informs us that a proclamation has been issued there calling upon the population to rise against the Papal Government and promising the support of Garibaldi. The people have remained quiet, but troops have been sent to watch the frontier. A Paris correspondent, writing on this subject, says:—"I fancy that I see a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, but it is the shadow of a big man's hand, as far as Italy is concerned, in the horizon of that financially and politically much-vexed kingdom. My letters are not quite what you would describe as 'comforting,' and now I see that General Garibaldi has accepted the command of the National Committee of Rome, to the members of which he has addressed the following letter."—

San Fiorano, March 22.

Gentlemen,—I am proud to call myself a Roman General. I accept with gratitude the mission you wish to confide to me, and I send you herewith the names of the Romans who are to compose the direction of the emigration residing at Florence. I feel confident that all the refugees will rally round that direction, which enjoys my fullest confidence, just as I place the same in you.—Yours for life,

G. GARIBALDI.

I do not know in the least what this command may mean; but I do know that among the revolutionary portion of the Romans who remain in Rome the name of Garibaldi is indeed a tower of strength, and that he is bound by what he considers the strongest ties to liberate the Eternal City from the hated priests. I do not say that he is in the right; but I feel sure that that is his religion, and the recently-selected Italian Ministry will act on the General and his following 'as does the wind on fire.'

There may be nothing in all this; but it is also possible that Rome is once more to be the theatre of stirring events, and therefore this may be a most appropriate time to publish our view of the city as it is. We shall not enter into any history or description of the Seven-hilled City, for everyone is, or ought to be, fully "posted up" on the subject. And even if some few are not, the story is much too long to be told in these columns. To Rome may well be applied Byron's remark as to Greece—

'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,  
Each step from splendour to disgrace;

from splendour, that is, as Republican, to disgrace as Imperial, and to deeper degradation still, as most persons will, perhaps, think, as Papal Rome—for it is a sad decadence to see lazy, wily priests shambling along those streets that were once trod by warriors, statesmen, orators, poets, painters, sculptors, such as no other city the world has ever seen has produced in such abundance and of such excellence. Should Rome—the mother of so many illustrious sons, and the scene of so much of the most important and valuable portions of history, whose fortunes have been so varied, and which has yet ever been so great under all phases of her marvellous career—again rise to the height of her old freedom and greatness, it will probably be under a regal form of government, as a portion, that is—perhaps as the capital—of resuscitated Italy. In that event she would once again revert to the political arrangements, modified by time and circumstances, that distinguished her foundation under Romulus and his immediate successors—if we are to adhere to received traditions, that is, and disregard the labours of the great historical iconoclast, Niebuhr.

We must not forget, however, that these be only dreams, and that as yet there is no actual stirring of the dry bones; nay, we are even assured that, to outward appearance, the reign of his Holiness is undisturbed, and that "the city was splendidly illuminated last Saturday night in celebration of the anniversary of the return of the Pope to Rome in 1850. Triumphant arches were erected at several points, and bands of music paraded the streets. The Pope was much cheered by the people."

A "BIG" SNOWSTORM.—A Detroit paper gives the following statistics of a recent snowstorm in the United States. The storm extended over a district of 1500 miles long and 300 miles wide, and the average depth of the snow was one foot. It estimates the weight of 5 tons to the acre, or 3200 tons to the square mile, or a grand total of 1,410,000,000 tons of snow, which is ten times the weight of all the wheat grown in the United States since the discovery of America; and this great weight of snow, says the paper, fell in one storm, one vast cloud, and within a period of four days only.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS.—The Corrupt Practices at Elections Bill, brought in by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, provides that when a candidate returned to serve in Parliament is charged with bribery, treating, or undue influence, either by himself or his agents, a petition complaining of the return of the candidate may be presented to the returning officer by a candidate or any three electors. Various regulations are prescribed for giving effect to the petitions, one of them being that the petitioners shall offer a recognisance to the amount of £1000 for the expenses of the inquiry; a copy of the petition must be forwarded by the returning officer to the Speaker of the House of Commons, who is authorised to form a list of persons to investigate charges of this description; no barrister of less than seven years' standing, and no judge or stipendiary magistrate, can be placed on the panel of election Commissioners; within fourteen days after the receipt of the Election Bill the Commissioners must proceed to investigate the charges, with a view to report thereupon. Any candidate found personally guilty of the above offences shall on a first conviction be excluded from the House for five years, and if found guilty a second time, the exclusion shall be for life. If found guilty by his agents, the candidate will be incapable of sitting in Parliament for the same county or borough during the Parliament then in existence. The Attorney-General is empowered to prosecute the offenders.

A CONSERVATIVE VIEW OF CONSERVATIVES.—The brother to the Earl of Carnarvon, the Hon. Auberon Herbert, who was an unsuccessful candidate in the Conservative interest for the representation of Newport, Isle of Wight, at the last general election, addressed his friends and supporters in that borough, at the Star Assembly-rooms, on Monday evening, when he withdrew himself from further connection with them on the ground that, since his contest for the borough, a change had taken place in his opinions, and he now differed in certain points from the Conservative party. He had hoped to find it possible to return to his own party, but felt that one mistaken step on their part had almost necessarily been followed by another. He regretted the way in which they had opposed the Reform Bill brought into the House by Mr. Gladstone last year, and thought that they should now have confessed that they misunderstood how the heart of the country was set upon Reform, and how great was the need for passing a large and comprehensive measure. They should have said that Reform had never been their business, but that of the Liberal party, and that, having voted and spoken against it, they would admit the necessity of the party subjecting itself to the will of the nation, and expressed their willingness to resign and let their opponents carry a measure. Such a course would, he was certain, have done more for the reputation of the present Ministry, for their party, and for their future influence, than that which they had pursued. There were but two bright spots in this mist and darkness—the resignation of three members of the Cabinet, between whom and himself there was a very narrow political sympathy, but he respected and admired them for their disinterestedness; and the conduct of Mr. Gladstone, to whom he felt bound to give credit for his manliness and courage amid the mass of insincerity he had met with on the subject of Reform. It was a difficult thing for the leader of the Liberal party to say that there was a certain point below which it was not advisable or expedient to draw the franchise line, and the conduct of Lord Cranbourne, the Earl of Carnarvon, General Peel, and Mr. Gladstone, by acting up to their convictions, deserved the admiration of all true patriots. It had cost him a great deal of pain to sever an old connection, and even to break with those of his own family with whom he found himself at difference; but, after what had taken place between them, it would be still more painful for him to preach to them any other political doctrines than those which he had already delivered in the borough.



## THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, FRIDAY, APRIL 12.

In the Committee.—Clause 3.—Amendment proposed. "In page 2, lines 3 and 4, after the words, 'and 2,' to insert the words, 'whether he is person or his landlord be rated for the relief of the poor' (Mr. Gladstone). Question again proposed. "That those words be there inserted." Question put. The Committee divided: Ayes, 289; Noes, 310.

## MINORITY—AYES.

Acland, T. D.  
Adair, H. E.  
Agar, Ellis, Hon. L. G. F.  
Agnew, Sir A.  
Allen, W. S.  
Amberley, Viscount  
Anstruther, Sir R.  
Antrous, E.  
Armstrong, R.  
Ayrton, A. S.  
Aylmer, R. S.  
Bagwell, J.  
Baines, E.  
Bancroft, A. C.  
Baring, Hon. A. H.  
Barnes, T.  
Barron, Sir H. W.  
Barry, C. R.  
Baxter, W. E.  
Bazley, T.  
Beaumont, W. B.  
Berkeley, Hon. H. F.  
Biddulph, M.  
Blake, J. A.  
Bonham-Carter, J.  
Bouverie, Right Hon. E.  
Bright, Sir C. T.  
Bright, J.  
Bruce, Lord C.  
Bruce, Right Hon. H. A.  
Buller, Sir A. W.  
Butler, Sir E. M.  
Butler, C. S.  
Buxton, Sir T. F.  
Calcraft, J. H. M.  
Calthorpe, Hon. F.  
Candlish, J.  
Cardwell, Right Hon. E.  
Carrington, Hon. C.  
Carnegie, Hon. C.  
Castlereagh, Viscount  
Cave, T.  
Cavendish, Lord F.  
Cavendish, Lord E.  
Cavendish, Lord G.  
Chambers, M.  
Cheetham, J.  
Childers, H. C. E.  
Cholmeley, Sir M.  
Clay, J.  
Clement, W. J.  
Clinton, Lord E. P.  
Clive, G.  
Cogan, Right Hon. W.  
Colebrooke, Sir T.  
Coleridge, J. D.  
Collier, Sir R. P.  
Colthurst, Sir G. C.  
Colville, C. R.  
Cowen, J.  
Cowper, Hon. H. F.  
Cowper, Right Hon. W.  
Cranbourne, Viscount  
Cranford, E. H. J.  
Crawford, R. W.  
Cremorne, Lord  
Crossley, Sir F.  
Davie, Sir H. R. F.  
De la Poer, E.  
Denman, Hon. G.  
Dent, J. D.  
Dering, Sir E. C.  
Devereux, R. J.  
Duke, Sir W.  
Duff, M. E. G.  
Duff, R. W.  
Dundas, F.  
Dundas, Rt. Hon. Sir D.  
Dunlop, A. C. S. M.  
Earle, R. A.  
Edwards, C.  
Elliot, Lord  
Ellice, E.  
Endell, Viscount  
Erskine, Vice-Adm. J.  
Esmonde, J.  
Evans, T. W.  
Ewart, W.  
Egryn, R.  
Fawcett, H.  
Fildes, J.  
Finlay, A. S.  
Fitzgerald, Right Hon.  
Lord O. A.  
Fitzpatrick, Rt. Hon. J.  
Foljambe, F. J. S.  
Fordyce, W. D.

## MAJORITY—NOES.

Adley, Rt. Hon. C.  
Akroyd, E.  
Andover, Viscount  
Annesley, Hon. Col. H.  
Anson, Hon. Major  
Archdall, Capt. M.  
Arkwright, R.  
Baggallay, R.  
Bagge, Sir W.  
Bagnall, C.  
Bailey, Sir J. R.  
Baillie, Rt. Hon. H. J.  
Baring, T.  
Barnett, H.  
Barrington, Viscount  
Barrow, W. H.  
Bartlett, Colonel  
Bass, A.  
Bass, M. T.  
Bateson, Sir T.  
Bathurst, A. A.  
Beach, Sir M. H.  
Beach, W. B. B.  
Beckie, Earl of  
Beecroft, G. S.  
Bentley, G. C.  
Benson, R.  
Beresford, Capt. D. Pack  
Bingham, Lord  
Booth, Sir R. G.  
Bourne, Colonel  
Bowen, J. B.  
Bowyer, Sir G.  
Brady, Dr.  
Brett, W. B.  
Bridges, Sir B. W.  
Briscoe, J. I.  
Bromley, W. D.  
Brooks, R.  
Browne, Lord J. T.  
Bruce, Lord E.  
Bruce, Sir H. B.  
Brnen, H.  
Buckley, E.  
Buckley, Sir R.  
Burrell, Sir P.  
Butler-Johnstone, H. A.  
Campbell, A. H.  
Capper, C.  
Cartwright, Colonel  
Cave, Right Hon. S.  
Chambers, T.  
Chatterton, Rt. Hon. H.  
Clinton, Lord A. P.  
Clive, Capt. Hon. G.

Nicol, J. D.  
Norwood, C. M.  
O'Brien, Sir P.  
O'Connor Don, The  
O'Donoghue, The  
Ogilvy, Sir J.  
O'Loughlin, Sir C. M.  
Onslow, G.  
O'Reilly, M. W.  
Osborne, R. B.  
Osway, A. J.  
Owen, Sir H. O.  
Packer, Colonel  
Padmore, R.  
Palmer, Sir R.  
Pease, J. W.  
Peel, Right Hon. Sir R.  
Peel, A. W.  
Pelham, Lord  
Peto, Sir S. M.  
Phillips, R. N.  
Portman, Hon. W. H.  
Potter, E.  
Potter, T. B.  
Power, Sir J.  
Price, R. G.  
Price, W. P.  
Proby, Lord  
Rawlinson, Sir H.  
Rebow, J. G.  
Robarts, T. J. A.  
Robertson, D.  
Rothschild, Baron L. de  
Rothschild, Baron M. de  
Rothschild, N. M. de  
Russell, A.  
Russell, F. W.  
Russell, Sir W.  
St. Aubyn, J.  
Samuda, J. D. A.  
Samuelson, B.  
Scholefield, W.  
Scott, Sir W.  
Scrope, G. P.  
Seely, C.  
Seymour, A.  
Seymour, H. D.  
Shafro, R. D.  
Sheridan, H. B.  
Sheriff, A. C.  
Simeon, Sir J.  
Smith, J.  
Smith, J. A.  
Smith, J. B.  
Speirs, A. A.  
Stacpoole, W.  
Stanley, Hon. W. O.  
Stansfeld, J.  
Stone, W. H.  
Stuart, Col. Crichton  
Sullivan, E.  
Sykes, Colonel W. H.  
Synan, E. J.  
Taylor, P. A.  
Tite, W.  
Tomline, G. T. M.  
Torrens, W. T. M.  
Tracy, Hon. Hanbury  
Trevelyan, G. O.  
Vanderbyl, P.  
Verney, Sir H.  
Villiers, Rt. Hon. C. P.  
Vivian, Captain Hon. J.  
Waring, C.  
Warner, E.  
Watkins, E. W.  
Weguelin, T. M.  
Western, Sir T. B.  
Whitman, J.  
Whitbread, S.  
White, Hon. Captain C.  
White, J.  
Whitworth, B.  
Wickham, H. W.  
Williamson, Sir H.  
Winnington, Sir T.  
Woods, H.  
Wylde, J.  
Wyllie, M.  
Young, G.  
Young, R.

## Tellers.

Brand, Hon. H. B.  
Adam, W. P.

Kavanagh, A.  
Kekewich, S. T.  
Kels, J.  
Kendall, N.  
Kennard, R. W.  
Ker, D. S.  
King, J. K.  
King, J. G.  
Knight, F. W.  
Knightley, Sir R.  
Knox, Hon. Major S.  
Lacon, Sir E.  
Laird, J.  
Lamont, J.  
Langton, W. G.  
Lanyon, C.  
Lascelles, Hon. E.  
Leader, N. P.  
Lechmere, Sir E.  
Lefroy, A.  
Lennox, Lord G. G.  
Lennox, Lord H. G.  
Leslie, C. P.  
Lewis, H.  
Liddell, Hon. H. G.  
Lindsay, Hon. Colonel  
Lindsay, Colonel R. L.  
Long, R. P.  
Lopes, Sir M.  
Lowther, Captain  
Lowther, J.  
MacEvoe, E.  
MacKenna, J. N.  
Mackie, J.  
Mackinnon, Captain L.  
Mackinnon, W. A.  
M'Lagan, P.  
Mainwaring, T.  
Malcolm, J. H.  
Manners, Rt. Hon. Lord J.  
Manners, Lord G.  
Marsh, M. H.  
Meller, Colonel  
Mitchell, T. A.  
Mitford, W. T.  
Montagu, Lord R.  
Montgomery, Sir C.  
Mordaunt, Sir C.

Mr. Alderman Salomons was prevented by indisposition from voting for Mr. Gladstone's amendment; but he paired with Colonel Lowther.

## (From the Sunday Gazette.)

The great division on Mr. Gladstone's amendment on Friday night was not as large as some of those last year upon the Reform Bill of the late Government, and it fell short by thirty-five of the aggregate strength present on the division which proved fatal to Lord Derby's Government in 1859, we believe the largest on record, when 638 members were in the House. On this occasion the total number collected within the House was 603, thus made up—Ayes, 289; noes, 310; tellers, 4; and chairman, 1. The top up of the minority must have been wrongly stated at 289, for only 288 names are recorded on the division list.

With regard to the party complexions of those voting, an analysis shows that 289 Liberals and 6 Conservatives made up the minority, and 267 Conservatives and 48 Liberals the majority. The following is the accurate summary of the state of the House on this occasion:—

Ayes .. .. .	288
Noes .. .. .	310
Tellers .. .. .	4
Pairs .. .. .	24
Liberals absent .. .. .	19
Conservatives absent .. .. .	5
Seats vacant .. .. .	6
Speaker and Chairman .. .. .	2
Total .. .. .	658

## The pairs were as follow:—

For the Amendment.	For Government.
Beaumont, Mr. H.	Hesketh, Sir T.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.	Barry, Mr. Smith-
Davey, Mr. R.	Bailey, Mr. C.
French, Colonel	Dunkellin, Lord
Glyn, Mr. G. C.	Treherne, Mr.
Ingham, Mr.	Gilpin, Colonel
Jardine, Mr.	Bernard, Colonel
Pollard-Urquhart, Mr.	Maxwell, Sir W. Stirling
Sanderson, Mr.	Conolly, Mr.
Salomons, Mr. Alderman	Lowther, Colonel
Sheridan, Mr. R.	Percy, Lord H.
Gavin, Major .. .. .	Bruce, Major Cumming

## The nineteen absent Liberals were:—

Baring, H. B.	Hibbert, Mr.	Nicholson, Mr.
Brookhurst, Mr.	Howard, Lord E.	Platt, Mr.
Brown, J.	King, L.	Russell, H.
Bryan, G.	Lloyd, Sir E.	Talbot, Mr.
Buxton, C.	Marshall, Mr.	Trail, Mr.
Cavendish, Lord F.	Matheson, Sir J.	Waldegrave-Leslie, Mr.
Crosland, Colonel		

## The five absent Conservatives were:—

Dupré, C.	Wyndham, P.	Williams, Colonel T. P.
Cecil, Lord E.	Yorke, R.	

The following are the forty-three Liberals voting with the Government:—

Akroyd, E.	Doulton, F.	Mackinnon, Captain
Andover, Lord	Elcho, Lord	Mackinnon, W. A.
Anson, Major	Ewing, H.	Marsh, M.
Bass, A.	Fitzwilliam, Hon. C.	Mitchell, T. A.
Bass, M. T.	Foley, H. W.	Parry, T.
Brady, Dr.	Grosvenor, Earl	Pim, J.
Briscoe, J.	Grosvenor, Lord R.	Pritchard, J.
Browne, Lord John	Heathcote, G. H.	Rearden, D.
Bruce, Lord Ernest	Hodgkinson, G.	Roeback, J. A.
Bulkeley, Sir R.	James, E.	Steel, J.
Chambers, T.	Lamont, J.	Stock, O.
Clinton, Lord A.	Lewis, Harvey	Vernon, H. F.
Corbally, M.	McEvoe, E.	Vivian, H. H.
Dalglish, R.	Mackie, J.	Whalley, G. H.
Dillwyn, L.		

## The six Conservatives voting for the amendment were:—

Baring, A. H.	Earle, R.	Hope, A. J. B.
Cranbourne, Lord	Heathcote, Sir W.	Hubbard, J. G.

The stray sheep on the Liberal side included something over twenty of those who formed the Adullamite party of last year. But among those whose names were more or less identified with the disaffection in the Liberal party, which caused the fall of the late Government, we find returning to the fold, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Horsman, Mr. Laing, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Agar-Ellis, Mr. W. B. Beaumont, Mr. C. Carrington, Sir E. Dering, Mr. R. Duff, Mr. Greville Nugent, and Captain Hayter; but Lord Dunkellin was paired for the Government, as was also Mr. Smith-Barry, the new member for Cork.

Colonel Taylor, although unable to attend the House in the earlier part of the evening to explain the "little matter" which formed the groundwork of Mr. Osborne's attack, voted in the division, but was not able to discharge his usual duty as teller, Mr. Whitmore officiating for him in conjunction with Mr. Gerard Noel.

## THE ADMIRALTY AND GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

The following letter, signed "Beta," which appeared in the *Times* one day last week, has again brought before public notice a matter which it was generally supposed had been finally and satisfactorily settled:—

When, just five weeks ago, the Prime Minister, on the petition of the Seamen's Hospital Society, intervened between the conflicting departments of the Admiralty and the Board of Trade, and attended by the First Lord of the Seamen and the President of the other, assured a deputation of the Merchant Seamen's friends that "her Majesty's Government were perfectly willing to grant the loan of a part of Greenwich Hospital to the Seamen's Hospital Society," we thought the question was set at rest. We thought performance would wait on promise, and that for this occasion only naval jealousy and greed would sit rebuked.

We little knew the power of low intrigue. No sooner was it noised about that the Merchant Seamen were to have a footing within the sacred railing of Greenwich Hospital than the scanty remnant and successors of the privileged officers who once monopolised all the fairest portions of the hospital buildings, unable to restrain their mortification, openly declared that the merchant seamen might be admitted, but good care should be taken they were stowed away in the remotest corner of the hospital. The Seamen's Hospital Society had always claimed one of the vacant quarters that face the river,

It is essential to their usefulness, as an institution offering general succour and claiming popular support, that they should be conspicuously placed in the eye of the merchant shipping, and that they should, as heretofore, be able to receive their patient out of the boat that brings him to their doors. A year ago they memorialised the Admiralty, and asked for the loan of Queen Anne's quarter, and, rather than retire from the river, had purchased a river site for themselves at the heavy cost of £10,000. This their necessity was clearly understood, and it was from the Admiralty refusal of this, and no other claim, that they appealed to the Earl of Derby. But there have been changes during the last five weeks. There is a new First Lord at the Admiralty and a new President of the Board of Trade; and the Admiralty have now the assurance to offer to the Seamen's Hospital Society a part of Queen Mary's quarter, which, for the reasons I am about to prescribe, is wholly unsuited as a hospital for the sick, and which the Admiralty know perfectly well cannot possibly be accepted by the society.

In the first place, it is built round three sides of a small square, the fourth side of which is inclosed by a colonnade, and the ventilation is much impaired by this arrangement of the building. In the next place, the wards are broken up into fireproof cabins or "cubicles" of brickwork and stone, which form part of the fabric and cannot be removed, and into which the beds entirely recede, like wine in the bins of a cellar. This, though conducive to the harbouring of vermin, was not altogether ill-suited for healthy pensioners, who required, in the interest of order, and for the storage of their private property, separate compartments, but is altogether unfitted for the working of a sick-hospital. No supervision over the nurses, no thorough ventilation of the sick-wards is compatible with such a plan. Fever and disease would effect a lodgment in these retired fireproof safes, and would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to dislodge. In the third place, Queen Mary's quarter is the portion of the hospital remotest from the river, and the entire front which looks in that direction is occupied by the chapel and dining-hall. In the fourth place, it is larger than Queen Anne's quarter, and exceeds the present requirements of the Seamen's Hospital Society, and, with the jealousy the Royal Navy feel for the merchant service, it would be the extreme of impolicy to locate the two services beneath the same roof. In the next place, it contains, on the ground floor, the largest "helpless wards" of all the quarters of the hospital, having accommodation for seventy-five crippled sailors in them, and these are just the wards which the Admiralty would most require for the Royal Navy if a war with a great naval power were once again to fill Greenwich Hospital with its victims. So that it is, of all the quarters of the hospital, that which is most unsuited for the Seamen's Hospital Society, and that which in time of war the Admiralty could least well spare. It is also the nearest in situation to the hospital schools, and contains the chapel, to which, I believe, the schoolboys now resort.

Queen Anne's quarter, on the other hand, has all the advantages which the other lacks. It is close to the river and well ventilated; it is the only quarter of the hospital which has in it no "helpless wards;" it is just the size which the Seamen's Hospital Society require; it is the quarter of the hospital which is most remote at once from the hospital infirmary and the schools, and least connected with any other part of the hospital buildings; the cabins in it project into the wards and are separated one from another by wooden partitions, easily removable; it has in it no pensioners; in a word, it is the quarter which the merchant seamen most require and which the sailors could best spare.

But the sailors are not, and never have been, the main consideration of the Board of Admiralty. Queen Anne's quarter is vacant of them; but the rooms which look upon the river provide pleasant apartments for half a dozen officers. It is true there are not officers to fill them; it is true there are officers' apartments and to spare vacant in the other quarters of the hospital; but the chaplain is there; and, for lack of officers, two of the clerks, who never before were lodged in the hospital, have been suffered to enter; and there still remains one of the old lieutenants of the hospital who did not quit with the rest of his gallant comrades; and, if I am not grossly misinformed, this small knot of estimable men have found the Board of Admiralty only too ready to sympathise with their private convenience and professional prejudices; and, though in themselves not powerful, have yet indirectly had the power to make the promise of the Premier void and of none effect. For, as the Admiralty know well, if they persist in their present offer, no course is open to the Seamen's Hospital Society but resolutely to decline. The conditions of the proposal are, in the interest of the society's well-being and utility, and of the health of their patients, absolutely untenable. But there is power yet in public opinion to force the Government not to trifle with us, and "keep the word of promise to our ear and break it to our hope."

The attention of Mr. Corry, First Lord of the Admiralty, having been called to this letter in the House of Commons, the right hon. gentleman made the subjoined statement:—

The writer of the letter, adverting to an undertaking on the part of the board before he went to the Admiralty, said, "Since then there was a new Lord;" but he omitted to state that the new Lord of the Admiralty had been the first to urge on the late Government to assign a portion of Greenwich Hospital to the use of the Seamen's Hospital; therefore, it was not likely that he should be the person to throw any obstructions in the way. When he went to the Admiralty his right hon. friend the present Secretary of State for War had, according to the usual course, called on the Medical Director-General and the Admiralty Director of Works to report on the subject; and, as the matter had created some agitation, he might be allowed to read one or two extracts from their reports. The letter to the *Times* stated:—

"The Admiralty have now the assurance to offer to the Seamen's Hospital Society a part of Queen Mary's quarter, which, for the reasons I am about to describe, is wholly unsuited as a hospital for the sick, and which the Admiralty know perfectly well cannot possibly be accepted by the society."

Now, he held in his hand the report of the Medical Director-General, one of the ablest officers in her Majesty's service. He said:—

"I previously visited the Dreadnought, in order to ascertain the probable amount of accommodation that would be required. I next, accompanied by the Captain Superintendent and the Medical Inspector-General, examined the entire range of buildings in Greenwich Hospital known as Queen Anne's, facing the east, and Queen Mary's, also facing the east and south. In the first-mentioned range of buildings the wards or floors are divided longitudinally by a massive wall, and again subdivided by wooden partitions into small cabins or compartments, each capable of containing two beds. These, though they may have been suitable for old men in good health, are by no means suited to the kind of patients admitted into the Seamen's Hospital, even if all the cabins and bulkheads were removed. Besides, in this quarter there is no kitchen or means of cooking for so many patients. On the opposite side of the public road which passes through the hospital is Queen Mary's quarter, forming an angle facing east and south. The ground floor in the eastern portion contains an excellent kitchen, in good repair and fit for use, capable of cooking for 800 men, with a good scullery, laundry, and washhouse, ample cellarage, and store-rooms. It also contains a large number of baths, beside foot-baths, with an abundant supply of hot and cold water. In the first, second, and third stories above the ground floor, extending round to the centre of the portion facing the school-ground, there are nine large wards, capable of containing upwards of 300 patients. I would, therefore, for these reasons, beg to propose that the portion of the building called Queen Mary's quarter, with the exception of the western half of the south block, might be offered to the committee of the Seamen's Hospital."

The director of works generally concurred in this report. He might also state that the letter in the *Times* had been laid before the board, and they decided to write to the Lord President of the Council and request him to permit Mr. Simon, of the Privy Council Office, to visit Greenwich Hospital and give his advice on the subject. As soon as the board receive his report they will pronounce their opinion; but that opinion will not be at all influenced by the anonymous letter which appeared in the *Times*.

It may be as well to call attention to the fact that, in the report of the Medical Director-General, from which Mr. Corry quoted, no notice is taken of the internal arrangements of those wards (in Queen Mary's quarter) that have been offered to the Dreadnought authorities. The Medical Director-General of the Navy has most strangely forgotten to take official cognisance of the very important fact that these wards are divided and subdivided into a great number of small rooms, all of which open out into a central arched and groined passage. If these partitions can be cleared away a fine open ward is the result; but the Dreadnought authorities are informed that the removal of these walls is impracticable, and so rightly decline to occupy quarters which can have no sort of adequate ventilation; and which would, consequently, soon become a pesthouse of the worst possible description. The wards in the first floor of Queen Anne's quarter, on the other hand, are, in most respects, similar to those of St. Bartholomew's Hospital; and there can be no sort of question that these would be chosen and the others condemned by any constituted authority on the laws of hospital hygiene.

REFORM MEETINGS.—Reform meetings are being held in various parts of the country, and within the next few days more are to come off. Next Monday Mr. Bright is to be at a great meeting at Birmingham. On Tuesday night Mr. Watkin and Mr. J. B. Smith addressed their constituents at Stockport. Everywhere the Government bill is strongly condemned, and the passing of a measure of household suffrage, pure and simple, is urged. At Norwich a protest and remonstrance against the Government bill have been passed, in which the injustice which the measure would perpetrate is ably pointed out. It becomes more and more clear that if the House of Commons is in any sense to represent the country it must agree to Mr. Gladstone's next amendment for shortening the term of residence from two years to one.



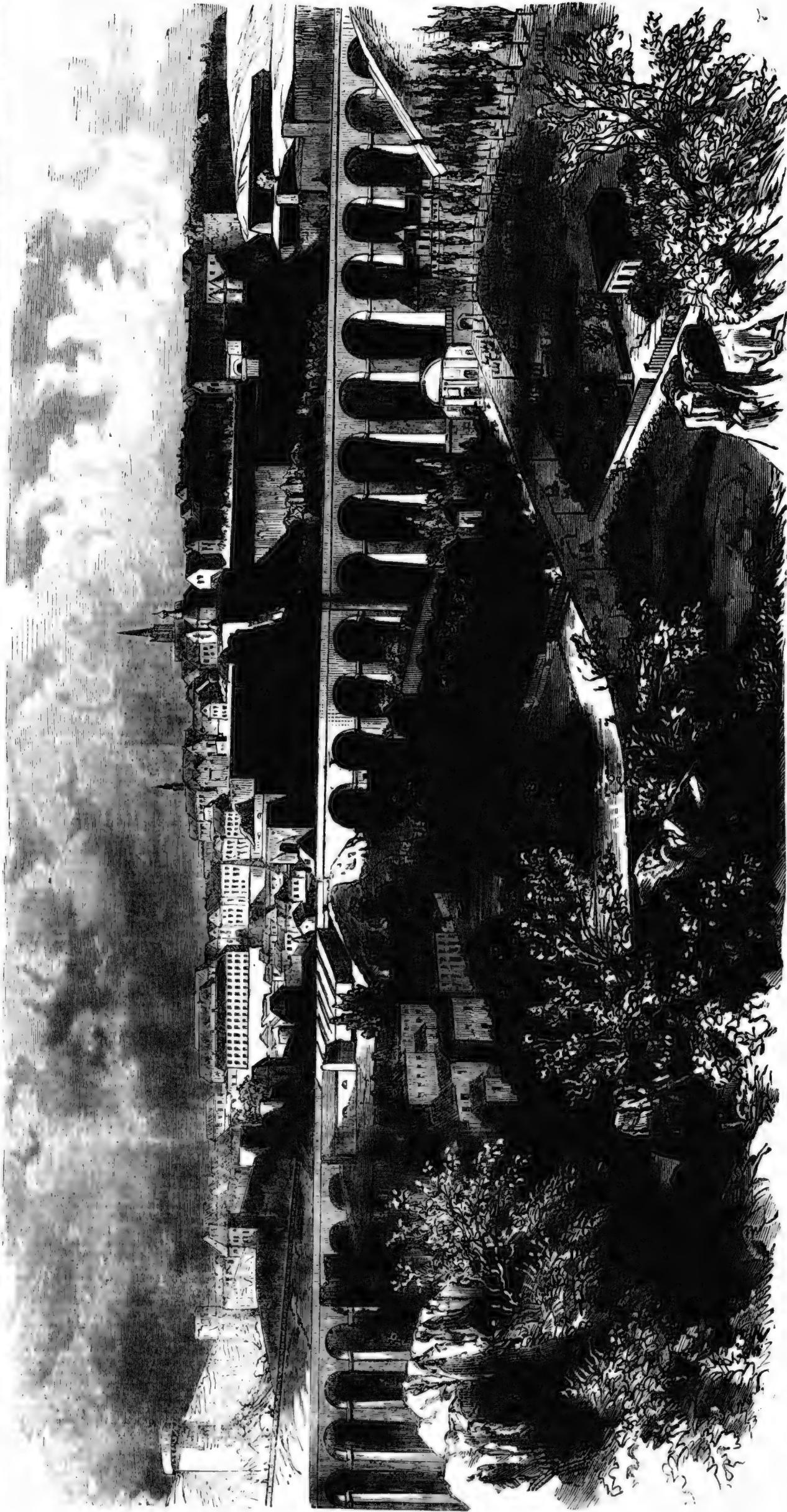
LUXEMBURG.

"The Luxembourg question" seems to assume a new phase every day, and it is by no means safe to venture on any prophetic assurance of an early settlement of the difficulty. Absurd as the statement may seem, the new solution announced in the foreign newspapers is that some of the great Powers, including England, recommended that the grand duchy shall be annexed to Belgium. The only possible reason for such an opinion must be that the Luxemburgers sided with the Belgians in their revolution; but it is not to be believed that the little kingdom would consent to

interpose by accepting what her two great neighbours, who already menace her, are coveting. The only probable outcome of the difficulty would be for both France and Holland to drop the subject altogether. It is by this time obvious enough that the people of Luxembourg are not anxious to be annexed, and strongly object to be sold with the land as though they were so many serfs on an estate, and an appeal to a plebiscite would either be a solemn farce or a ludicrous disaster for France. Of course, it is possible, under certain conditions, to secure anything whatever by "the suffrages of the people;" but at Luxembourg there is a fortress, and a fortress full of Prussian soldiers would be likely to counter-

act any little games which might leave the electoral urns to French interests. In point of fact, when the Prussian garrison announced that it did not intend to leave the fortress, the Grand Duke, who, as our readers know, is also King of Holland, withdrew his proposal to dispose of the duchy, although its sale and the price of £4,000,000 was already agreed on. On the 1st of this month Count von Bismarck, an eminent Hanoverian Liberal, rose in the North German Parliament to ask if Prussia really intended to surrender German territory. He told the Premier openly that while German Liberals wished for peace they preferred war to insult. Then came the checkmate to Louis Napoleon. Count Bismarck cautiously replied

that Count von Bismarck's speech was worthy of a representative of the people, declared that he knew nothing of any cession, affirmed that Prussia must be consulted before any such arrangement could take place, and added, significantly, that, while anxious not to wound the susceptibilities of France, he trusted that "no Power harboured the design to invade the indubitable rights of Germany." Of course, it was the King of Holland, and not Louis Napoleon, who was supposed to alter his intentions; and so far the matter was merely withdrawn. But it had gone a little too far not to be an awkward business, and is not to be hushed up so easily; and the Emperor of the French, not relishing his position, has reopened the



THE TOWN AND FORTRESS OF LUXEMBURG.

question by requiring that the Treaty of 1830, which settled the political position of Luxembourg, shall be examined by the European Powers. This, it is declared, means one of two things: either that Louis Napoleon is determined not to yield to Prussia alone without a committee of all Europe, or that he intends to lead up to a war which many politicians regard as imminent. There can be no doubt as to the language of the French press on the subject. The most moderate of the newspapers, *La France*, said the other day: "It is an affair to be settled between the King of Holland and France. If it be necessary to consult the great Powers, they will be consulted; and if Prussia has any observations to offer, let her then offer them. But for the present, that is not the question. The question is this—Will you or will you not put an end to your occupation of Luxembourg, to which you have no right; and which is an insult and a menace to us?" If Prussia answers

by the evacuation of that fortress, it is, perhaps, peace at least for some time. If Prussia answers by remaining, or even by dismantling the fortress, it is either immediate war or such a humiliation as France is not in the habit of accepting."

The most contradictory reports are, of course, circulating as to the final result of this dispute; and there is a rumour for quadruple alliance of France, England, Belgium, and Holland, proposed by the King of Holland, in consequence of the menacing attitude of Prussia. It is said that the project has been received favourably by the Emperor of the French, and that the Commissioners from Holland and Belgium are now in London for the purpose of sounding the opinions of the English Cabinet.

There can be no doubt whatever that Luxembourg is of sufficient importance to make its possession a matter of considerable moment in the

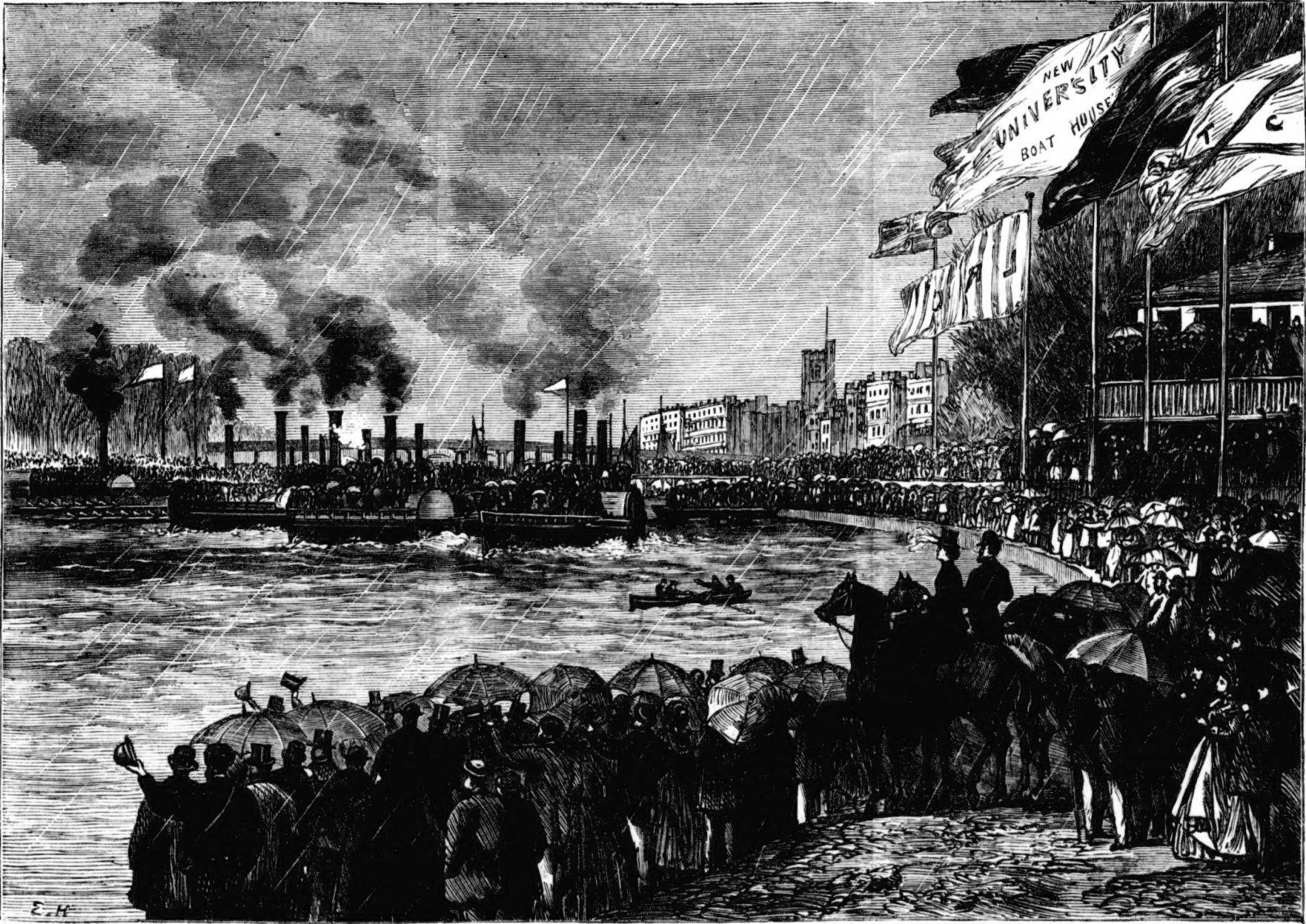
event of a war; but it will be strange if a dispute as to the right of possession should lead to a war. In that case, this territory itself would be the very first point on which the struggle would commence. The duchy of Luxembourg, which belongs to the kingdom of the Netherlands and is a State of the former Germanic Confederation, lies partly on the Ardennes range of hills draining into the Meuse, and partly on the low ground near the Our, north of the hills. This 900 square miles of territory, with its 200,000 people, was formerly joined to the present Belgian Luxembourg, a more valuable territory to the west, lying on the higher ground of the same range of Ardennes, and with considerable mineral wealth, as well as timber and pasture lands. The whole territory was formerly an independent State under its own Princes. In 1714 the succession merged in the house of Austria. Napoleon annexed it to France, and at the Congress of Vienna it was incorpo-

rated with the Germanic Confederation, under the sovereignty of the younger line of the house of Orange-Nassau also filling the throne of the Netherlands. At the Belgian revolution of 1830, the whole of the grand duchy, with the exception of the fortress, joined cause with the insurrection, and it was not until 1839 that by diplomatic negotiations a part of the country was again brought back to its allegiance to the Confederation and the King Grand Duke. Under the new arrangement about half the former province was again united to the Confederation, to which was added, nominally, the duchy of Limburg; but the latter part of the treaty has never been carried out, and the duchy of Limburg remained an integral part of the kingdom of the Netherlands, neither politically nor socially connected with Luxembourg or with the Germanic Confederation. The Constitution of the grand duchy dates from 1815, but was altered by decree of July 9,





MR. ERNST SCHULZ'S ENTERTAINMENT, "MASKS AND FACES," AT THE EGYPTIAN HALL.



THE UNIVERSITY BOAT-RACE: THE START FROM PUTNEY.



1848. A Chamber of Deputies, elected under the same conditions as the Parliament of the Netherlands, exercises the legislative power.

The capital of the grand duchy of Luxemburg, represented in our Engraving, stands partly on level ground on the banks of the Alzette, and partly on a scarped rock, 200 ft. high, which is reached by flights of steps and zigzag streets. The fortress on the rock is regarded as, perhaps, the strongest place in Europe after Gibraltar, and the lower town is also fortified besides being occupied in founding cannon. In fact, the position of Luxemburg, in a strategical sense, can scarcely be over-estimated in any war between France and Prussia. In the event of such a war, the German armies would have to operate on two principal points—Alsace and Lorraine, Belgium and the Lower Rhine—separated by the hilly country between the Moselle and the Meuse. In case of an offensive attack against the west, or the upper and middle Rhine, it would be necessary for her to secure the important line of operations—Mayence, Kaiserslautern, and Metz, which lead into the valley of the Marne.

This line passes through a network of French fortresses, of which Metz is the most important, but easily kept in check by Luxemburg, which is only seven miles distant. The holder of Luxemburg is, in fact, master of the valley of the Sarre, which is only closed by Sarrelouis; but this valley cuts at right angles the line of operations already mentioned of an army entering the Middle Rhine into Champagne. If Luxemburg were to become a French fortress, it would, in concert with Metz, destroy the lines of communication of a German army, and would prevent the left flank of such an army entering from the Lower Rhine into Belgium. Four lines of railroad, of which Luxemburg is the point of juncture, also give that fortress enormous facilities for communication with Nancy, Metz, Namur, Brussels, Spa, Liege, Mayence, Sarrebruck, Sarrelouis, and Treves. Two of these lines run parallel to the French frontier, touch several fortified places, and are in direct communication with Paris. The strategy of the French army would be greatly favoured by this railroad parallel to the frontier; and its displacement at will from the south to the north, or *vice versa*, would be easy. On the other hand, the Luxemburg line runs parallel to the Prussian frontier on the Belge-Luxemburg side, connects the valleys of the Moselle and the Meuse by the shortest way, and cuts the Cologne-Liege-Brussels line near Verviers. To Luxemburg and the junction point of these three lines must be attached, from the French point of view, great importance. The important network also which connects the valleys of the Rhine, the Nabe, the Sarre, and the Moselle, debouches on Luxemburg, and on it is the only line of communication by rail with a theatre of war in Lorraine and Belgium. It is of vast importance, therefore, to the Germans, and its importance would be increased by the completion of the line between Treves and Cologne, by which Luxemburg could be placed in direct communication with the strongest places on the banks of the Rhine, and serve, in fact, as the advanced post in operations which may be imminent, but which it will be to the interest of Europe to discourage. Our readers will see by this necessarily slight description of the position of the place, that the present question of its cession to France is one of more importance than would be involved in a mere territorial dispute.

#### M. ERNST SCHULZ'S ENTERTAINMENT, "MASKS AND FACES."

THE entertainment which M. Ernst Schulz some time ago brought before a London public at the Egyptian Hall, and which he entitles "Masks and Faces," still continues to attract numerous and pleased audiences. As our readers have already been told, M. Schulz's performance is perfectly unique of its kind, and is as curious as it is unique. His entertainment is divided into four portions. In the first he gives a dozen different human types, without the aid of any accessories except two movable gaslights. In the second he shows the effect of different forms of beard upon the human countenance, the beards being simply shadows thrown by a magic lantern upon his face. In the third he supplies the face to a number of grotesque portraits which lack that important feature; and in the fourth he dresses himself after the manner of a dozen different races of men, colouring his face with the assistance of the toned lenses of his magic lantern. Our Engraving shows some of the curious effects which M. Schulz so successfully produces by the very simple apparatus he employs.

#### THE GREAT UNIVERSITY BOAT-RACE.

FEW things are more curious in the history of our national sports than the extraordinary rise in popularity and interest of this great contest. Anyone who will refer to the daily papers of some ten years ago will find the race recorded in little paragraphs, which may state that there were a good many spectators, and as often as not that there were only very few. Now, with fine weather and a reasonable time for the start, half London goes to see it. Certainly, in numbers the crowds are greater than even at the Derby. It takes a very great many people indeed to throng some four miles and a half of river banks; and a long stream of carriages must attend to cover more than a mile of shore, and still leave such a block upon the roads that those who come at all late must get out and walk, if they mean to see the race at all. Ten years ago light and dark blue colours were articles of almost purely domestic manufacture. Now, shops are full of them; nor is the decoration at all confined to a mere rosette—scarfs, neckerchiefs, and gloves must be either light or dark blue for gentlemen nowadays; while ladies show their proclivities, whether "light or dark," in bonnets, veils, ribbons, and parasols. Strange, however, to say, great as is the interest which this race excites, and greater as it appears to grow each year, there is very little betting on it. Probably more money changes hands at a little country race-meeting than is won or lost on the issue of this great contest. It is essentially, too, a race which the fair sex seems to have taken under its especial patronage. No matter what the hour or the season, there are always as many ladies to witness it as gentlemen; and even the cup day at Ascot does not command a more brightly-dressed assemblage than crowds the banks of the Thames when the University boat-race is to be rowed.

As everyone knows, the struggle on Saturday resulted in a seventh victory for the dark blue. Of the twenty-four races that have now been rowed since the first, in 1829, after which there was an interval of seven years during which there was no contest, ten races have been won by Cambridge and fourteen by Oxford, and the lovers of this great national sport now hear with alarm the rumours that no race will be rowed next year. Apart from the general dissatisfaction which such whispered rumours create, nothing in reality could be more unwise for Cambridge than to take such a course and relax in her efforts now when so near her goal. It would be very much as if Mr. Griffiths on Saturday had told his crew to stop rowing because his opponents were getting a little ahead. In the hypercriticism which has been so liberally showered on the Cambridge crew during their training a mass of nonsense has been talked and written about their not "catching" the water, "clipping" their stroke, not rowing from their legs, and so on *ad nauseam*. The plain truth is that Cambridge in her best days, when she won year after year four times in succession, never launched a better crew upon the Thames than that which rowed the race on Saturday. The beauty of their style, the quickness of their start, the uniform precision of their feathering, and the speed of their "spurts," when Mr. Griffiths chose to put them on, have never been seen on the river before. The odds which were offered against them were due more to the traditional prestige which Oxford has now acquired than to any real difference in the crews. No one who saw the boats at exercise over their ground could feel confident of the result of the race for either side. Oxford, with their deep stroke and very high style of feathering, seemed certainly likely to win in heavy and lumpy water; and heavy and lumpy water they had last Saturday. Had there been a better tide, with light wind and a smooth surface, it is possible that Cambridge would have gone in a winner. As it was, however, the Oxford men rowed best under the conditions in which both started. Their crew, too, were decidedly the stronger, and never, unless in dangerous

emergencies, put on those "spurts" in which Cambridge excelled, but which exhaust the crew so much as to be fatal to their endurance in so long a race.

In spite of the earliness of the hour and the bitter inclemency of the morning there were thousands of people along the river banks from Putney to Mortlake soon after eight in the morning. Trees, banks, roads, and muddy marshes were alike thronged—every spot, in short, from which a view of the race could be got, and very many from which, as it happened, no view could be got at all, had its groups of eager spectators. Yet, as has been said, the weather was not of a kind to tempt people out so early or so near the river. It was worse than a usual English fête day. The wind was very cold, and the rain came down with sullen vehemence except when it was quickened into momentary activity by the gusty squalls, and drove like small shot in one's face.

Of course, the great points of attraction were the starting-place, at Putney; and the winning-post, above Barnes Bridge. At these places the crowds were enormous. There was no lack of animation in the scene. The very numbers of the people prevented this; but there was certainly not so much of festivity. Who could be festive in such merciless weather? The gay fleet of little craft that is generally to be seen skimming over the water, almost as quick and quite as bright as summer flies, was absent on Saturday. There were fewer steamers, too, perhaps, than usual; for some of them, owing to the earliness of the hour and the state of the weather, could not get passengers enough to make the trip remunerative. There were, nevertheless, more than were desirable, and two made themselves especially conspicuous by the gross misconduct of their managers.

Oxford had been out, as usual, for a little paddling in the morning; the Cambridge crew did not take the water till the start. It was intended originally that this should be made at eight, but the slackness of the tide almost compelled a little postponement in the time. The delay must have tried the patience of the spectators, standing, as they were, fully exposed to the heavy downpour of the rain. Still greater was the disappointment when the crews, after going out, returned again. It was nearly nine o'clock before they passed down to their boats, and sixteen finer or better-trained young men it would have been difficult to find in England.

The following is a list of the crews:—

OXFORD CREW		CAMBRIDGE CREW	
	st. lb.		st. lb.
1. W. P. Bowman, University	10 11	1. W. H. Anderson, Trinity	11 0
2. J. H. Fish, University	12 1	2. J. M. Collard, St. John's	11 4
3. E. S. Carter, Worcester	11 12	3. J. U. Bourke, Trinity	12 9
4. W. W. Wood, University	12 6	4. Hon. J. Gordon, Trinity	12 3
5. J. O. Tinné, University	13 4	5. F. E. Cunningham, King's	12 12
6. F. Crowder, Brasenose	11 11	6. J. Still, Caius	11 12
7. F. Willan, Exeter	12 8	7. H. Watney, St. John's	11 0
8. R. G. Marsden, Merton	11 11	8. W. R. Griffiths, Trinity	12 0
C. R. W. Tottenham (cox.)		A. Forbes (cox.), St. John's	8 2
Christ Church	8 8		

They took the water a little before nine, and, going easily to the starting-point, turned up the river and waited with poised oars till the word was given. It must be remembered, as we have already said, that Oxford, with her usual luck, won the choice for place, and of course took the best—the Middlesex side. At two minutes to nine the word was given, and, like a flash, both boats were off. It could hardly be said which was the first to catch the water, and it is almost unnecessary to say that both crews were to a certain extent hurried, and did not settle to their practised form for the first 300 yards or more. Then Cambridge began to draw their boat a little ahead, but never for more than a few feet, when the Oxonians quickened their deep, strong strokes, and crept up again. From this to Hammersmith Bridge the race was inexpressibly exciting. The boats were side by side, each crew looking only to the work they had in hand, and stretching to their oars with a power that made them bend like willows and sent their craft forward with a visible leap at every stroke. Neither needed incentives to do their best; but they had them, nevertheless; and the wild cries of "Row, row!" to each crew, with the hideous clamour of directions from their partisans and friends, of "Hands down!" "Quicker stroke!" "Feather higher!" &c., came from all sides. But amid all this the stroke oars of the boats kept their own course, and increased or lessened, as they thought best, the pace by which they guided their crews. The steering of each was, perhaps, not so good as it would have been in better weather; but the floods of heavy rain and gusts of sharp, cold wind that drove full in the faces of the coxswains would have been a more than sufficient excuse for a much less direct course than either took. Before Hammersmith Bridge was reached, Cambridge had drawn nearly her length ahead. Under the bridge, which was black with spectators, the Cambridge boat led magnificently, amid a roar of applause, which was taken up by thousands on both banks of the river. After them, pell-mell, like a straggling pack of hounds, the steamers came rolling and tumbling on, swaying from side to side, as their passengers rushed about to cheer the competing crews, and volunteer, amidst a hopeless uproar, some well-meant words of advice, encouragement, or entreaty. Oxford again, however, increased her speed of stroke, though she was never within five or six minutes of that of Cambridge, and drew up again so fast alongside her opponents as to justify all the odds which then, amid the most tremendous cheers from boats and banks, were being offered in her favour. The struggle then was most exciting. It would be impossible, no matter what amateur critics may say, to witness anything better than the style of rowing in each boat. Cambridge rowed quicker, but her style was beautiful. The oars rose and fell with the precision of machinery, and the low feathering, little more than clear of the surface of the water, was the very perfection of rowing. The Oxford stroke, though less pretty to look at, was evidently that to win, and the heavy water over which both boats had to pass gave Oxford a decided advantage in her high feathering. At this time she began to take a decided lead, and, amid the almost frantic applause of her supporters, began to draw well ahead. Still, in spite of every advantage both of tide, which was better in the course she took, and her style of rowing, which was admirably suited to the rough water, she could never draw her boat quite clear of Cambridge. The "spurts" which the latter put on cannot be too highly praised. At the moment when it seemed Oxford was to have her own way the light blue again bent to their work, and literally shot up beside their antagonists. These desperate efforts, however, began to tell on Cambridge, and when about half a mile before Barnes Bridge, they were rowing somewhat "ragged," and steadily, but slowly, Oxford drew ahead. Here, however, a change took place that seemed almost unaccountable to those that witnessed it. The Oxford crew appeared to relax their efforts just as Cambridge made another magnificent "spurt." None knew what the Oxford crew were about. They seemed to have slackened into idleness. Roars, shouts from the bank, entreaties from the boats around them, and a great hoarse cry from both sides of the river of "Row, Oxford, row!" seemed to have no effect upon them; while Cambridge drew on, and when near the railway bridge had got her boat ahead. Then only did the Oxford crew seem to realise their danger, and the struggle became the most intensely exciting ever seen. None believed that when so near home Oxford would be able to recover the advantage gained by the splendid burst which had put Cambridge a little ahead, and the efforts each crew made were almost painful in their earnestness to witness. They laid to their oars till the boats sprung, stroke after stroke, through the water. Every one of the spectators seemed more or less wild with excitement; and, if entreaties and cries of encouragement could have effected anything, each must have come in first. It is difficult to describe the enthusiasm of their different supporters as Oxford at last, in spite of all the efforts of Cambridge, drew her boat level, and then began to get its bows ahead. They had, however, no easy task. As often as she showed a foot in front, Cambridge, by a desperate effort, dashed up again; and so they went, almost stroke and stroke, under Barnes Bridge, amid such a roar of applause as has seldom before been heard on the Thames. Then it was evident, or, at least, said to be evident, to experienced eyes that the Cambridge crew were blown and exhausted by their repeated "spurts." The result showed that this must to a certain extent have been true, for Oxford won, but never, to the last second, did the Cambridge crew

relax in their struggle for victory. To the very winning-post they pushed the Oxonians almost to exhaustion to hold the very little they had gained, and never till the flag was actually passed did any of the friends of dark blue feel the race secure, for the bounds with which the Cambridge boat now and then rushed forward seemed to make it a doubt, even when there was only fifty yards to row, that Cambridge would not win. As it was, however, the Oxonians seemed too keenly alive to the strength and spirit of their antagonists ever to give them a chance again. With a sturdy, strong-pulled stroke, every man pulling not only from his legs, but apparently from every fibre and muscle in his body, they kept their boat just half a length ahead, and, amid deafening shouts, so passed the flag, winning one of the quickest and most desperately-contested races that have ever been rowed on the Thames. It is really hard to say which crew deserves most praise. Nothing could exceed the gallantry and determination with which each struggled to the end, and struggled, too, when the chances fluctuated almost every minute, and the hope of regaining the lead, which each boat lost in turn, seemed almost hopeless. Oxford has won for the seventh time in succession, and Cambridge has been beaten, but after such a struggle as should make her more proud of her defeat than of many of her former victories. Benson's chronograph was, as is the custom now, used to time the race. Actually it has been rowed in a shorter time. Relatively, when the state of the water, the force of the wind, and the almost entire absence of tide are considered, it may be reckoned as one of the quickest. The pace from first to last, when these disadvantages are considered, was really tremendous. The boats started at 8h. 58 min. 24 sec., and finished at 9h. 21 min. 3 sec., so that the whole course of nearly four miles and a half was rowed in 22 min. 39 sec. Last year the chronograph registered 25 min. 51 9-10 sec., so that this year it was 3 min. 12 9-10 sec. quicker. The ablest amateurs and the best professional watermen were alike surprised at the speed with which the race from first to last was rowed.

#### OPERA AND CONCERTS.

"NORMA," "Faust et Marguerite," "L'Africaine," and "Fra Diavolo" have followed one another in quick succession at the Royal Italian Opera. "Norma," as we have already mentioned, is played with the same cast as last season. In "Faust," the part of Mephistopheles is now assigned to M. Petit, who is but a sorry substitute for M. Faure. There is nothing subtle, nothing noble, nothing diabolical, from any point of view, in M. Petit's Mephistopheles, albeit M. Petit was the original representative of the character when M. Gounod's musical version of MM. Barbier and Carré's dramatic version of Goethe's "Faust" was originally produced at the Théâtre Lyrique. M. Petit is a grotesque and very ill-bred demon, with a considerable dose of the mountebank in his composition. Like nearly all French actors, he knows how to walk the stage with ease, and with such grace as naturally belongs to him, and he possesses decided merit as a singer. Nevertheless, we cannot say that his singing pleases us altogether in the part of Mephistopheles. In the burlesque serenade especially, instead of vocalisation, we are treated by M. Petit to a series of barks. M. Petit's next character of importance will, we believe, be that of Peter in "L'Etoile du Nord."

Another new baritone, Signor Cotogni, has appeared as Nelusko in "L'Africaine," but not with any very remarkable success. Signor Cotogni and M. Petit, together, are not worth M. Faure; that is to say, M. Faure is a better Mephistopheles than M. Petit and a better Nelusko than Signor Cotogni. It is, above all, with Signor Graziani, however, that Signor Cotogni should be compared; and here again the comparison would not be very favourable to the new comer. As actors, Signor Cotogni and Signor Graziani are very much alike; one is as good as the other; but Signor Cotogni wants Signor Graziani's magnificent voice. It is in Italian opera, however, that Signor Cotogni is expected to distinguish himself.

In "Fra Diavolo," which was played, for the first time this season, on Tuesday last, the only important change from the cast of last year was in the part of the English nobleman, Lord Koburgh, or "Lord Roeburgh," as he is indifferently called. This character, so admirably sustained by Signor Ronconi, has now fallen into the hands of Signor Ciampi, who entirely fails to do it justice. Nature never intended Signor Ciampi for a comic singer. He is supposed by his friends, we believe, to possess what, by a contradiction of terms, is called "dry humour;" but he seems to us to possess no humour at all. For this sad want he endeavours to make up by a superabundant display of energy; but he causes no one to laugh, and makes the judicious grieve.

But although the débutants of this season have, hitherto, not been very fortunate, it must not be supposed that the representations, generally, at the Royal Italian Opera have been at all unworthy of that magnificent establishment. Mme. Vilda, of the beautiful voice, has sung admirably in "Norma;" Mario has proved himself as superior as ever to all other tenors in the part of Faust; and no one could be more fascinating than Mdle. Pauline Lucca as Marguerite in M. Gounod's opera, and as Zerlina in "Fra Diavolo." The next work to be produced at the Royal Italian Opera is Verdi's "Balto in Maschera," which is announced for Tuesday.

Her Majesty's Theatre opens on Saturday next (April 27), when Verdi's "Lombardi" will be performed.

Now that the theatres are no longer closed during Passion Week, the concerts of sacred music, by which this week was formerly distinguished, have now lost much of their importance. Of course, the opportunity of giving one or two extra performances of "The Messiah" is not lost sight of, and Handel's great work was given on Wednesday by the National Choral Society at Exeter Hall. On Good Friday (oddly enough, that day being not a feast but a fast) a concert, in which Mr. Santley took part, followed by other rejoicings, was given at the Crystal Palace.

COLONEL TAYLOR, MR. DILLWYN, AND MR. OSBORNE.—Colonel Taylor publishes an account of his part in the proceedings which led to the episode in Friday's debate. He states that he did not mention Lord Derby to Mr. Dillwyn at all, save in a remark referring to his illness; and of Mr. Disraeli he only observed that there could be little doubt the right hon. gentleman would bring the subject of the compound ratepayer before his colleagues in the Cabinet at the first opportunity, and he (Colonel Taylor) believed Mr. Disraeli was individually not indisposed to give the question raised by Mr. Hibbert's amendment a candid consideration. Mr. Dillwyn, half an hour afterwards, showed the gallant Colonel a written memorandum of the foregoing remarks, to the correctness of which Colonel Taylor assented, "observing that our conversation was a private one, that I expressed my own opinion and belief only, but that I had no objection to his repeating what I had said to any of his friends."—Mr. W. O. Stanley says he only had the document in his hands for a few seconds, and being in no way a secret or confidential communication, he spoke of it to several members. He adds, "I never had any communication with Mr. Osborne until five minutes before he addressed the House, when he asked me if I could substantiate the fact of my having seen such a document; to which I replied I would if appealed to."—Mr. Dillwyn says that what Mr. Osborne read was not a copy of the memorandum of the conversation, and was substantially incorrect. He nevertheless intends asking Mr. Osborne in Parliament, after the recess, how he obtained the paper.—Mr. Brand writes to supply the missing link of the chain through which the statement read by Mr. Osborne was communicated to him:—"On Friday last," says the right hon. gentleman, "Mr. Stanley called upon me and informed me that he had seen on the previous evening, in the House of Commons, a memorandum, drawn up by Mr. Dillwyn, stating, on the authority of Colonel Taylor, that 'Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli were in favour of accepting Mr. Hibbert's amendment.' He added that the memorandum had been freely shown to many members, and expressed surprise that I had not heard of it. It struck me that this statement was of the greatest importance as affecting the question before the House, and I accordingly asked Mr. Stanley whether he could give me the terms of the memorandum. He thereupon dictated the memorandum, which was afterwards read by Mr. Osborne, and he assured me that it was substantially correct. He declined to meet the question himself, but was willing that it should be raised in the House, and would be prepared, if appealed to, to vouch for the substantial accuracy of the memorandum. I showed the memorandum to several members, who, without exception, concurred with me in thinking that the matter should be cleared up openly in the House. Among others, I showed it to Mr. Osborne, and invited him to raise the question in the House. He said that he would consider the matter, and communicate with Mr. Stanley, to whom I referred him."



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